DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 200 033 FL 012 190

AUTHOR	Perren, G. E., Ed.
TITLE	Foreign Languages in Education. NCLE Papers and Reports 1.
INSTITUTION	Centre for Information on Language Teaching, London (England).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-903466-22-8
PUB DATE	79
NOTE	98p.; For related document see FL 012 191. Light print may not reproduce clearly.
AVAILABLE FROM	Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, 20 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AP, England (4 pounds).
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Careers; Elementary Secondary Education; Employment Opportunities; Language Planning; *Language Role; *Language Teachers; *Needs Assessment; *Second Language Programs; Statistical Data; *Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS	*England

ABSTRACT

This is the first of two volumes of working papers produced by working groups of the National Congress on Languages in Education. The papers in this volume are concerned with the priorities to be accorded to non-native languages at all levels of education in Britain. The following papers are included: (1) "Foreign Languages in the School Curriculum," by C. V. James; (2) "The Linguistic Needs of Pupils," by E. W. Hawkins; (3) "Priorities and Patterns of Provision," by G. R. Potter; (4) "The Education of Teachers of Foreign Languages," by R. J. Godfrey and E. W. Hawkins; (5) "Foreign Languages in Industry and Commerce," by A. C. W. Crane; and (6) "The Views of School Heads: A Survey," by G. M. Matthews. (AMH)

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ED200033

National Congress on Languages in Education

FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN EDUCATION

NCLE papers and Reports 1

The first of two volumes of papers from Working Parties for the first assembly, Durham, 1978

Edited by G.E. Perren

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Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research

First published 1979
© 1979 Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research
ISBN 0 903466 22 8
Printed in Great Britain by Staples Printing Group
Published by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, 20 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AP

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Introduction

G.E. Perren

The National Congress on Languages in Education originated from discussions between representatives of a number of professional associations and organisations concerned with the teaching and study of languages at all levels of education in Britain. In 1974 it was agreed to establish a national forum for debate, equipped with machinery for the continuous study and report on matters of common interest. It was envisaged that the work of the Congress should be carried on mainly by working parties which would concentrate on selected problems. Reports by these working parties would be presented at biennial Assemblies of representatives from all the organisations supporting the Congress. After receiving and considering these reports, each Assembly would in its turn identify and recommend subjects for new working parties to report on at the next Assembly.

In 1976 two such groups were set up, to report to the first Assembly to be held in 1978. As by then over 30 organisations had declared general support for the Congress, each working party consisted of a nucleus of experts, invited to serve as individuals, assisted by a number of consultants who might be nominated by any constituent organisation wishing to be associated with its work. Administrative and secretarial services for the working parties, and for the whole Congress, was provided by the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research.

It was desirable initially that subjects for working parties should be of direct interest to as many constituent organisations as possible, while at the same time being issues on which it would be possible to make genuine contributions to current educational theory and practice.

Thus working party 1 (chairman: Professor E.W. Hawkins) was asked to study *The priorities to be accorded to non-native languages at all levels of education in Britain* — a subject which clearly affected all teachers of foreign languages as well as having important administrative implications. Working party 2 (chairman: Professor A. Spicer) was asked to study *The relationship between the acquisition/teaching of the mother tongue and the learning/teaching of other languages* — a subject with significant but often neglected psychological and pedagogical implications for teachers of English as well as of foreign languages. Both the subjects chosen clearly affected the future of the curriculum as a whole as well as of language teaching in particular, both seemed appropriate at a time when the general content and organisation of secondary education was under intensive review. Neither was to be concerned merely with techniques of teaching and both were attempting tasks hitherto not tackled on a broad scale.

Inevitably, and desirably perhaps, there were areas of possible overlap between the two fields of work, and it was necessary to ensure that each group should be continuously aware of the activities of the other. This, however, presented little difficulty since interim reports and papers were circulated to both and there was good liaison. While some differences of emphasis arose from their different approaches to some common problems, any general educational principles which emerged from the deliberations of both working parties seemed remarkably congruent.

In the event neither working party felt that it was able to produce a single collective report on its chosen subject, and for the first Assembly in July 1978 each therefore provided a number of papers, written by individuals but approved by the group, dealing with various aspects of their subject. These papers, edited and revised, now provide the content of two volumes published by CILT as *Foreign languages in education* and *The mother tongue and other languages in education*.

The present volume includes the papers produced by working party 1 which collectively seek to provide a general rationale of the teaching of foreign languages in Britain. Perhaps it should be noted that *foreign* here means foreign to the learner, so that the very important question of the place of the languages of the various minority groups now resident in Britain as *mother tongues* in education is excluded from this volume, although to some extent dealt with in its companion volume.

Below, chapter 1 by C V James begins by summarising, comparing and contrasting the numerous justifications for foreign language teaching which have been put forward by various professional protagonists and by others. Collectively these are the public reasons why we teach and have taught foreign languages in schools during the past 50 years or so. These reasons are presented by James according to four assumed roles of language learning — educational, social, political and economic. Employing this categorisation, he then provides some suggested models of priorities for teaching different languages within the educational system, and then deals with the interesting idea of 'language distance' as a factor affecting learning and teaching.

In chapter 2 Hawkins describes a linguistic education which ideally might be offered to children of primary and secondary age in maintained schools. In a sense this complements the previous chapter, indicating not what *is* being done but what *could* be done; it makes a strong plea for the treatment of 'language' as a consistent whole — to include both mother tongue and foreign languages within a single curricular concept. (A further paper by Hawkins in *The mother tongue and other languages in education* develops this theme.)

Chapter 3 provides an assessment of priorities from the point of view of a chief education officer, concerned mainly with the allocation of resources within existing economic and administrative constraints. While giving full weight to the educational justifications for teaching foreign languages, Potter notes that they should (but often do not) improve after-school career opportunities. This chapter has valuable appendices describing the present deployment of teaching resources in two rather different authorities, with comments from seven others.

A chapter on teacher training then deals with the supply of qualified teachers, which is related in turn to the current decrease in the numbers of 'A' level candidates taking foreign languages. It refers to the content of initial training, suggests that courses for teachers of foreign languages should be linked with those on teaching English as a mother tongue, and indicates the special needs of in-service courses, where lack of coordination may easily lead to wastage of resources.

A C W Crane in chapter 5, on the use of foreign languages in industry and commerce, discusses the vocational value of such foreign language skills as may be acquired in conventional education. Crane also shows how the widespread use of English in Europe may affect both the need and the desire to learn other languages in Britain.

Finally an appendix compiled by G.M. Matthews summarises replies to a questionnaire on the role of foreign languages received from 53 head teachers. While the total number of schools covered is not large, these views could well be representative. They are interesting, if not very surprising.

Collectively then, these papers represent limited and critical self-examination by professionals with declared interests. They exhibit some unease when questioning the existing state of affairs and show little self-satisfaction. In schools, languages like other subjects must now be justified in terms of the expenditure of time, effort and resources measured against some scale of 'success' achieved. Definitions of success are, however, elusive and are certainly not attempted in these pages. Unlike some other subjects, foreign languages in schools have never had a very secure curricular base except for a minority of pupils. Even today, when international communication has become a commonplace for all, their appeal (and even less their necessity) to all pupils in British schools is far from apparent. Other important problems are raised, although not referred to in any detail in these papers: those of mixed-ability teaching, of defining exactly what should be taught and tested, of teaching English as a foreign language to minorities and of teaching other foreign languages to the same minorities. Similarly there is little here about adult, further and higher education — where the deficiencies of schools may be complemented or occasionally compensated for.

There seems, however, a conviction that foreign languages are highly desirable, if not yet essential, components of the secondary curriculum, that the maintenance and development of a highly trained foreign language teaching force is essential, and that somehow Britain's changed status in the world *ought* to necessitate more foreign language learning rather than less, despite the international spread of English. The writers do not argue the cases for any specific languages at the expense of others, in this they may be wise, since the educational value of any one rather than another is hard to prove, and *vocationally* the economic worth of knowing a particular language is now far more variable among individual occupations than ever before. In a sense then the 'priorities' in the original terms of reference of working party 1 have not been determined, these papers may indeed show that they cannot be decided in any simple and conclusive way but must remain the subject of continuing discussion.

In the minds of many of those involved in the working parties, and indeed in the origin of the Congress as a whole, lay the idea that some sort of overall policy or national plan for foreign language teaching in Britain was desirable. Although, as it appears from many of the papers here, it is generally believed that foreign languages in the school curriculum must be justified by their general educational value rather than because they are vocationally necessary to the majority, the notion that it is in the national interest to produce adequate numbers of linguists — like engineers, doctors or electricians — has some currency. In its crudest form this has sometimes led to suggestions that there should be quotas of French-speakers, German-speakers, Russian-speakers and so on — trained according to some forecast of manpower requirements. But, of course, the implementation of any such policy or national plan requires more than the views or recommendations of experts, administrators and teachers. It needs support by the learners — and their parents. Whatever these may be told is good for them by educators, they are more likely to decide for themselves today than ever before what it is worth their while to learn in school. Language

teachers often deplore the lack of motivation among their pupils, rather as if suitable injections could improve it. This lack may be symptomatic of an overt shift from cultural to material educational values. What, pupils may now ask, are foreign language skills worth — in terms of jobs and salaries after school? For, whatever the teacher thinks, this may be a prime consideration for the learner and his parents. We are often reminded by employers that ability to speak or read a foreign language has little market value, except as an addition to other skills or knowledge. Foreign language skills are, as Matthew Arnold once put it, always showy and sometimes useful. Vocationally, however, they are at best only an auxiliary to some other skill which they may further. A French-speaking British engineer is paid as an engineer not as a linguist. Although a secretary may obtain a more interesting job because she knows German she may not be paid more. However, foreign language skills are not yet taken for granted in Britain, unlike some other European countries where proficiency in a foreign language (usually English) is assumed as a normal educational achievement. It is not yet clear whether closer relations with Europe have affected needs and incentives to learn languages. It can be argued that languages are less needed because most educated Europeans know English, or that they are more needed because, with Britain's changed role in the world, the British must show greater understanding of foreign cultures and institutions and make more direct social, political and economic contacts with individuals abroad.

During the past few years much concern has been shown by teachers at the 'decline' of foreign languages in schools. While more pupils attempt them, it is said, many fail and standards of achievement as measured by 'A' level entries or results are falling. Recurrent cries of 'Crisis' signify dissatisfaction if not a loss of confidence. This could indicate that formerly unquestioned aims are now less generally accepted: that the 'lit'-based study of a language is no longer highly rated, or that other subjects are deemed more 'relevant'. It has been prophesised that foreign languages may virtually disappear from all but a few schools and that universities and polytechnics will have to teach all languages *ab initio* — and then only as the handmaids to other disciplines.

In education generally, and in foreign language teaching in particular, educators may now be dealing in a buyers' market, very unlike the sellers' market of the past. So educational — or curricular — needs and demands are assessed no longer in terms of assumed social, moral and intellectual values but according to estimates of individual or national self-interest. In spite of public commitment to non-selective, 'non-elitist' school systems we now subscribe widely to what Arnold called the 'commercial theory of education' — one which inherently expects rewards for achievement or at least for effort. This is oddly reflected sometimes. There is a movement to re-structure language syllabuses in schools so as to provide multiple or differentiated objectives to suit the needs of children with different abilities or aptitudes. What are loosely called graded tests or examinations are proposed to provide rewards or recognition for very elementary achievement. Are these only an incentive of last resort which, rather like trading stamps, purport to give credit for the smallest and most trivial purchases? Or do they represent a genuine movement to plan the progression of language learning and to take account of changed social

needs? Will they lead to better all-round 'standards' or will they merely certify lower ones as respectable? At present one cannot answer these questions, but there is a danger that an over-empirical approach — one in which the syllabus is derived from what the majority *can* do rather than from a fresh definition of what it may be useful to learn — will distort the vocational as well as the educational value of foreign languages in schools.

Doubtless such problems are not confined to languages but also apply to other subjects in the curriculum. But the other subjects may have a more secure or less obviously dispensable function in popular opinion. Languages have the privilege as well as the need to justify their place in schools.

1. Foreign languages in the school curriculum

C.V. James

The primary sources for this paper were submissions made by professional associations and individuals concerned with language teaching particularly in schools on the role of foreign languages in the curriculum. In attempting to classify the arguments, other published sources have been used to construct an appropriate framework.

There is general agreement that foreign languages should be included in the curriculum of every pupil. It is not claimed that the advantages offered by learning a foreign language are at present gained by every pupil in every class. It is acknowledged that foreign language teaching in this country is experiencing problems as a result of its expansion over the past few years. There is, however, optimism that the problems can be solved and, indeed, that many are near to solution. The arguments put forward in this paper should be seen in this light. They suggest what foreign language teaching can achieve and what, in many cases, it achieves already. They indicate what foreign languages can contribute to the development of our children.

The point is made that mathematics and science seem to be experiencing similar problems to the foreign languages. (See *Mathematics, science and modern languages in maintained schools in England*. HM Inspectorate, 1977.) A strong case is made for the role of foreign languages in the curriculum, but this role can only be fulfilled if, like mathematics and science, they receive the support they need, particularly in terms of the provision of teachers.

The roles of language learning

The role of foreign languages in the curriculum is seen as fourfold: educational, social, political and economic.

Educational

With impressive unanimity, the submissions stress that learning a foreign language can make an important contribution to the general educational growth of all pupils. The development of any pupil can be helped as much by a foreign language as by any other part of the curriculum. For example, almost all the eight main aims of schools set out in the DES Green Paper *Education in schools: a consultative document* (HMSO, 1977), can be achieved through foreign language study. Similarly, the cognitive skills set out in Bloom's *Taxonomy of educational objectives* (1965) have their counterparts in foreign language learning. ('Is language a discipline?' *NALA Journal*, Autumn, 1972.)

There is general agreement that the study of a foreign language makes a major and distinctive contribution to the educational experience of schoolchildren, by which

it can bring human understanding and a heightened self-awareness (*Russian, why not?*). It is culturally broadening and educationally humanising and helps to train the mind (HMC, 1976). Its intrinsic educational value (*Russian, why not?*) is thought by some to be comparable with that of any other subject (*The place and aims* 1972), but to others it makes an invaluable and unique contribution to the education of every child, offering him what no other subject can, an opportunity to see into another society and to see his own language and society through the eyes of a foreigner (BALT, 1977). For whereas it demands skills dependent to a large degree on general intelligence and general ability, it also offers scope for the exercise of skills not regularly called upon by any other subject in the normal curriculum (MLA, 1977).

A major part of the educational task of the school is to help young people to think clearly and develop balanced and socially adjusted personalities, and the study of a modern language contributes to this end (*Tools for the job, 1972*). The long-term aim is to develop the individual — his personality, his skills, his ability to think and to manipulate language — and foreign language teaching has a part to play in all of these. It should expand the pupil's personal horizons, add a new dimension to his experience and arouse in him a curiosity to know more about the world outside (Dunbar, 1977). Similarly it provides an instrument for the acquisition of knowledge, for the understanding of the thoughts, hopes and feelings of others by listening and reading, and, at a more advanced level, for the expression of one's own by speaking and writing (Hill, 1970).

A number of writers see the unique contribution provided by language learning at school as an awakening within the pupil of a conceptual awareness of language (ATR, 1977) or as a general linguistic training which will give the pupil a surer appreciation of the value of words and help him to use his own language more effectively by showing him how language in general works (*The place and aims*). This belief in an increased understanding and mastery of the native English has not always found official support. 'There can be no doubt that a boy gains very much in the study of his own language by the study of another' (Taunton report, 368) became, by 1918, subject to a certain amount of qualification. 'It appears far from certain that the early beginning of foreign languages in schools is advantageous to their study or education in general' (*Report, 1918*). For some, the study of one foreign language is valuable not primarily as a mental discipline, but as a means of 'learning to learn' other foreign languages as the need arises in later life (MLA). Experimental evidence for transference of skills, knowledge or attitudes is notoriously difficult to obtain, but there is an impressive weight of opinion, not only amongst linguists, that skills, knowledge or attitudes acquired through foreign language learning do have a general and positive influence. The exercises involved in language learning, such as developing an ability to perceive pattern, are widely believed to help the pupil's thinking process as well as increasing his linguistic awareness to both the foreign and the native language (Dunbar).

Even so, it is not primarily in terms of general linguistic performance that the benefits of language learning are seen. When the purpose of schooling is accepted as (*inter alia*) making pupils as free or autonomous as individuals as they have it in them to be (Hawkins, 1974) — the logical consequence of society's political decision to 'choose democracy' — then the study of foreign languages can be seen as one

of the essentially emancipating elements in the curriculum, without which the individual remains imprisoned in the environment in which he is raised or dependent on others to give him an account of the polyglot world. This is true not only of the able few who travel or read with profit in the foreign language, studying a foreign language compels even pupils of modest ability to compare concepts in simple but important ways, and learning a new sound system, for example, can be a lesson for slower learners in overcoming insecurity when faced by the different or the unusual (Hawkins, 1972). A great deal is gained along the way, even if fluency is not achieved (Dunbar). The case is eloquently put by a Flemish linguist:

> Even without going into further details we may say that foreign language learning demands intensive training in task-analysis, in the techniques of observing and selecting facts, in the inductive processes of conceptualisation and generalisation, in the classification and ordering processes, in the deductive rule-governed behaviour, in the formulation of hypotheses and their testing out against the usage of others. (Van Passel, 1975)

Social

Some refinement of the definition of the effect of language learning in school may be seen if the topic is taken in its social aspect. Discussion of the social role of language learning has become something of a minefield. Given the educational benefits of foreign language learning it would clearly be socially unjust to restrict them in any sense to one part of the the school population. This is stated unequivocally in the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Resolution:

> a knowledge of a modern language should no longer be regarded as a luxury reserved for an elite, but an instrument of education and culture which should be available to all. ((69)2)

The points made above suggest that a foreign language should be seen as an essential, and therefore compulsory, part of the curriculum of every child. There is much concern that the proportion of pupils who continue a foreign language after the age of fourteen is so low, and some consider it desirable to ensure that no less than 50 per cent of pupils continue until the age of sixteen plus. Even this is seen by some as only an intermediate goal (BALT).

Few writers would confess to a desire to turn the school into a weapon for the total annihilation of the division of society into classes (*RCP, 1918*), but the essentially class nature of modern language study in schools before collectivisation into comprehensives is several times criticised and the socially liberating potential of language study emphasised. Taking issue with those who have suggested that language study should be restricted to middle-class pupils only, Hawkins believes that the working-class child, conscious of the low value placed by his own community on his background or his parents' occupation, has in the past found in the study of a foreign 'neutral' culture a new dignity and acceptance, especially when he goes abroad. For Hawkins, foreign language study not only provides for the culturally disadvantaged a chance to compete with their 'advantaged' peers from a starting gate of common ignorance, but it gives a chance to retraverse some important conceptualising patterns to pupils who, for a variety of reasons, have been less successful in 'categorising',

in Bruner's sense, important areas of learning (eg number and the calendar, the beginnings of insight into grammatical patterns, accurate matching of written symbols to sounds, auditory discrimination of rhythms and stress in speech, etc). Hawkins argues that it is precisely because it is an indispensable element in breaking out of the vicious circle of conceptual deprivation stemming from social disadvantage that foreign language study should have a place in the curriculum of the less able pupil (*CILT Reports and Papers 8*).

There is support for this point of view from professional associations and individuals seeing strong social as well as educational reasons for teaching a foreign language to the less able pupil, who through the medium of the foreign language may develop self-assurance, fluency of self-expression and an increased self-awareness not possible in his native language (*Russian, why not?*). For pupils with high linguistic aptitudes also language study may provide a challenging course, making great intellectual demands (*Russian, why not?*). In either case, foreign language learning helps toward the fulfilment of the aim of opening doors and ensuring that the child is not inescapably chained within the limits of his environment (Dunbar). It has been said that an important function of education is to prepare people to cope with changes in society, no other subject can make such a crucial contribution as a foreign language towards preparing young people to meet new societies or changes in their own society (BALT). Study of a foreign language is essential if our pupils are to understand the world in which they are growing up and will live (Dunbar).

The methodological problems that arise from the teaching of languages for social reasons need not be discussed here, but attention ought perhaps to be drawn to the question of motivation. Teachers may themselves feel quite certain of the liberating role of foreign language learning, but the pupils may still have to be convinced. It is precisely amongst children from disadvantaged backgrounds that the drop in numbers continuing language study may be most marked (West, 1977). The need to improve this situation is recognised. Courses should be offered within the reach of at least the majority of pupils and the move towards graded syllabuses and tests to encourage worthwhile objectives for learners of differing abilities, ages and motivation is welcomed (BALT). Pupils of all abilities can benefit considerably from foreign language learning and there is evidence that this is becoming a reality as the comprehensive system becomes established (*Modern languages in the schools of Yorkshire and Northumberland*, 1977). Parental attitudes can also be improved through their children's work and particularly through penfriends, visits and exchanges (Schools Council Modern Languages Committee).

Political

Closely allied to the social role of foreign language learning is the political role in the sense of engendering an international outlook. Educating the rising generation in the spirit of internationalism (*RCP, 1918*) may have too ideologically suspect a ring for many sensitive ears, implying as it inevitably does a somewhat circumscribed constituency of nations, but in the context of the European Community this is an increasingly common refrain. The Community sees the achievement of European union as conditional on an enhanced public understanding and interest, and therefore

feels a special responsibility to stimulate educational developments which could contribute to this end. Wishing to achieve a situation in which all could communicate in one foreign language and comprehend another, the Commission believes that citizens should have the opportunity *in the course of their education* to learn at least one and preferably two languages other than their mother tongue (*Supplement 3/74*), and since for most people 'education' is restricted to school, this amounts to a plea for at least two foreign languages in the curriculum in the interests of a political European union. It may fairly be taken to refer only to the languages of the Nine.

Similar pronouncements by the Council of Europe, in fact antedating the EEC statements, refer to a somewhat larger, though still restricted, constituency. If full understanding is to be achieved in Europe, language barriers must come down. Only if the study of modern languages becomes general will full mutual understanding and cooperation be possible (*Resolution (69)2*). Cooperation, indeed, is simply not conceivable unless serious efforts are made to facilitate communication by promoting language study (*Rec. 535*). Even wider is the purview of the Helsinki *Final Act*, which regards the study of foreign languages and cultures as a vital element in communication and the strengthening of international ties, resolving therefore to promote the wider spread of foreign language study among the different types of secondary education establishment as well as at other levels.

These exhortations are heeded in various of the sources consulted. The cultural value of language learning is seen as receiving a new emphasis (*Mathematics, science and modern languages*) at a time when a foreign language is an indispensable requirement for international understanding and cooperation (Sloman). They are related, too, to the problems of the newly developing society in Britain: through sympathetic contact with nations and individuals different from ourselves, the language teacher aims to promote tolerance and goodwill, which ought to be amongst the major aims of the total experience (Dunbar). The unique quality of foreign language learning is that it offers the pupil an opportunity to view with sympathy and understanding another society and another culture (BALT). There is little likelihood of children taking an interest in daily life in other countries unless they are deliberately led to do so via language learning (MLA). And in these days of increased mobility and tourism, all travel is enhanced by an acquaintance with the language and culture of the country visited (*A case for Italian*).

Warning that the process of foreign language learning is not necessarily sufficient to promote positive attitudes towards the foreign culture, Burstall finds the influence working in something like the opposite direction: knowledge proceeding from contact with a foreign culture may lead to a more sympathetic attitude toward learning the appropriate language, and hence to higher achievement (Burstall, 1974).

Economic

An early enquiry into the foreign language needs of British industry and commerce found an increasing realisation that the growth of exports depended very much on British ability to speak to the potential customer in his own language, both socially and in business contexts (FBI, 1964). Today HM Inspectorate sees Great Britain as heavily dependent on international trade for survival, and cites this as a powerful

argument in favour of foreign language learning (*Mathematics, science and modern languages*). The character and quality of education have obvious significance for our national economic efficiency: foreign languages must therefore be considered among the key subjects of the curriculum.

Opinion on this subject is unanimous. In a country which depends for its survival on its trade, it is vital that the British should be able to compete on equal terms, which necessitates a good grasp of the languages of the countries they are dealing with (BALT). If we fail to overcome our linguistic insularity, we may fail also to secure the future economic well-being of our country (Dunbar). Language learning is no longer merely a vehicle for the educational and social development of the individual; it also has a precisely defined function as a commercial tool on a national scale. This is in turn linked with the political factor: a better knowledge of modern European languages will lead to improved international links, on which economic progress increasingly depends (Council of Europe, *(69)2*).

The argument hinges eventually on the question of *national needs*, and there are calls for an assessment of national needs and for a national language policy based on these needs (BALT). Evidence is available to suggest the volume of needs, at least in so far as *demand* for languages is a reliable indicator (Emmans, 1974; Stuart & Lee, 1972). But it does sometimes seem that what *demand*, in terms of *use*, in fact indicates is not so much *need* as an assessment of what is likely to be available, ie of *provision*: demand grows upon supply (Ager & Clavering, 1977). Similarly, however, it is probable that more people would be more motivated towards foreign language learning if employers in industry, commerce and elsewhere were to show expectations in this respect similar to those shown by employers in other countries.

Reference should perhaps be made to the need for foreign languages in the British Civil Service. It is noteworthy that, in spite of British membership of the European Communities, the Civil Service Commission in its recruitment literature for administrative trainees makes no mention of the advantages for a senior British civil servant of possessing a knowledge of a foreign language at the negotiating level. Indeed, even for entry into the higher grades of the Diplomatic Service, although it describes knowledge of foreign languages as a basic professional skill, the Commission stresses that a candidate may be recommended for appointment 'even if he cannot show evidence of the ability to learn language' (J. Coveney, 1978).

In this context, it is regrettable that the House of Commons Expenditure Committee Report on the Civil Service, published in September 1977, makes no reference to the need for British higher civil servants to be able to converse in a foreign language. A sub-committee of the Committee visited the *Ecole Nationale d'Administration* in Paris and praised it in the Committee's Report for its success in producing first-rate administrators. The *Ecole* has a modern languages department, and the study of a foreign language is compulsory for all students. No mention of this aspect of the training of French higher civil servants is made in the Committee's Report.

The York exercise (Emmans, Hawkins, Westoby, 1974) was quite invaluable in testing techniques of enquiry, but an actual investigation of the contemporary scene needs now to be carried out. To be of lasting value it should be a process of continuous monitoring, tracing the effect of British participation in the European

Community, moreover, the influence of the ever-increasing stature of English as a 'world language' must surely be taken into account. Results of a local survey conducted in the West Midlands differ significantly from those of the Emmans report, showing a much higher level of language demands and use, but revealing also quite different patterns (Ager, 1977).

Yet, although analysis of undergraduate language needs at the University of Aston, which may certainly not be expected to be biased towards the arts and humanities, reveals a similarly high level of demand for foreign language courses, it confirms, like a Swedish predecessor (Ahlquist, 1968), that even in the most 'practical' or 'applied' spheres, a knowledge of languages is also a socially liberating force and responds to a personal need:

> Language provision is neither frill nor Lindsay Liberal study. In the students' eyes it is a necessity, not as an extension of their professional training, but as ancillary to their careers, a necessary instrument of social and geographical mobility within their profession: *a new freedom*. (Ager & Clavering, 1977)

Which language? by roles

Educational

For many, perhaps most, pupils the educational gains from foreign language learning can be obtained from the study of one foreign language. Although all pupils should have the opportunity to take up a second foreign language two or three years after starting the first, it is argued that not more than one foreign language should be compulsory.

It is difficult to justify one foreign language more than another on educational grounds. In fact, the choice is usually made on other grounds, such as the logistic, and it is this which accounts for the present predominance of French.

Social

At one level, the same obtains for the social role as for the educational: no language has obvious claims to priority. There are, however, possible variations: the middle class connotations of French have been pointed out (Sidwell, 1976) and it seems likely that German has a more attractive image for many people, especially in the North. It is also worth mentioning that the traditional attitude to modern languages as a 'girls' subject' may stem from attitudes to *French*: attitudes to German or Spanish, for instance, may be quite different.

Perhaps all that can usefully be said is that neither on educational nor on social grounds is there any reason why French should occupy the place it now does, and that arguments for a shared programme between French, German and Spanish can be made with some cogency.

Political

The choice of languages designed to play a political role will depend, as suggested above, on the constituency of nations considered. For 'little Europeans' we come again to French and German, perhaps also with Italian and, in future, Spanish. For

those with wider horizons, still in the context of Europe, we must also add Russian. And for those who regard the whole world as their parish, we must add further Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Persian etc and, above all, we must think in terms of *several languages*.

In considering the political role, in fact, we move on to a different plane: our aims now are practical use of languages (in the plural) and for a proportion, at least — mobility across linguistic frontiers.

Economic

The same could be said of the economic role, with the addition that the list of desired languages will change with our economic position and policy. Our scheme of language provision must therefore be flexible to a degree not needed at least to fulfil our first two roles.

Which language? by languages

All languages claim the same educational value, not least through their literatures, but it is likely that the question of language distance is important here. For French, common linguistic features and cultural history provide an accessibility not rivalled by any other language. Geographical proximity is important for international contact, and the status of French as an international language is shown by its role, with English, in nearly all major international European Communities' organisations: the Council of Europe, the UN, OECD, NATO, Western European Union and the Organisation of African Unity. It can be argued that command of English and French goes further towards making one 'a citizen of the world' than a combination of English with any other language.

For at least half a century educationists and government reports have been pointing out the importance of German, the result has been less than impressive. German is not so important as French as a formally recognised international language. However, next to English, it is certainly the language most widely used in Europe, with the aid of which, for example, one can travel in the Slav and Hapsburg lands from the Baltic to the Bosporus, from the Rhine to the Volga. In the economic sphere, the importance of German can hardly be denied, despite signs of fading *Wirtschaftswunder*. The importance of the DDR is increasing; it is unwise to think of German in terms only of the Federal Republic, Switzerland and Austria.

The importance of Italian studies in the context of Western culture is obvious' (*A case for Italian*). ATI sees Italian as modern Latin and therefore a refuge for those who regret the exodus of the classics from the curriculum. As a language that has changed very little since the Middle Ages, it is the key to early literature as well as modern. A case can certainly be made for the comparative accessibility of Italian in terms of lexis, pronunciation etc, but its importance internationally or commercially is not given convincing prominence.

Teachers of Russian see the immense educational value of Russian studies in terms of the contribution of Russian writers and thinkers to the world of literature and ideas, the importance of understanding Soviet society today and the national need for Russian linguists for practical purposes. Myths about the difficulty of Russian

should be dispelled. Learning Russian at school is for many children a worthwhile educational experience, but the 'grotesque disequilibrium' (*Annual Report*) between the study of Russian and other languages still persists.

A very strong plea is made for Spanish by ATSP and the Association of Hispanists. 'To learn Spanish is to discover a new world'. 'We need not dwell on the educational role, which is not less than that of any other language. But in the area of the social roles, the question of language distance is taken up again, quoting Burstall that 'achievement variables have a more powerfully determining effect on later behaviour than attitudinal values'. ATSP claims that 'here the traditional wisdom of the teachers may be true', ie that pupils can tackle Spanish since for the English-speaking pupil, it is in the early stages, comparatively accessible in terms of sound system, written/spoken forms and grammatical complexity. Spain, emerging from forty years of dictatorship, is a specially fruitful subject of study. Spanish is the world's third language, spoken by 250 million people in 21 countries. The Third World will loom large in the future, and the adolescent's natural concern for the poor and underprivileged makes Latin America an equally suitable subject. Britain will neglect such a large part of the Third World only at her peril.

From the British Association of Orientalists comes a down to earth plea. Certain Asian and African languages are becoming commercially very valuable, above all Arabic, where many potential customers with money to spend are not fluent in a European language. Persian is also valuable as may, in the long run, be Chinese and Japanese.

Which language? at what institution?

From even a cursory glance it is obvious that the importance of the various roles differs, in some cases, from language to language. This may help to suggest the appropriate place of the study of individual languages in the educational ladder — primary, secondary, tertiary/further education. If Japanese is important chiefly for its economic role, this is not an argument for introducing it in the primary school!

Another factor that may also help to decide the appropriate place of individual languages is that of the possible difference of roles between first and subsequent foreign languages. This was discussed by the Association of Teachers of Russian. The study of a *first* foreign language is a unique experience which contributes to the pupil's general education by instilling within him a conceptual awareness of language and an understanding of another society and culture. The study of a *second* foreign language has the specific educational function of developing the potential of pupils with definite motivation and aptitude for language learning. It may also have a vocational role, especially at tertiary level.

There was a qualified welcome for the moves towards foreign language teaching in primary and middle schools and some hope was expressed that these moves will be consolidated and extended. It seems entirely appropriate that the curriculum at this stage should include a foreign language for social, political and educational reasons. It is argued, furthermore, that if a substantial number of secondary pupils are to achieve the levels of linguistic proficiency necessary to meet their own and society's requirements, it will be vital to start the learning process before the age of

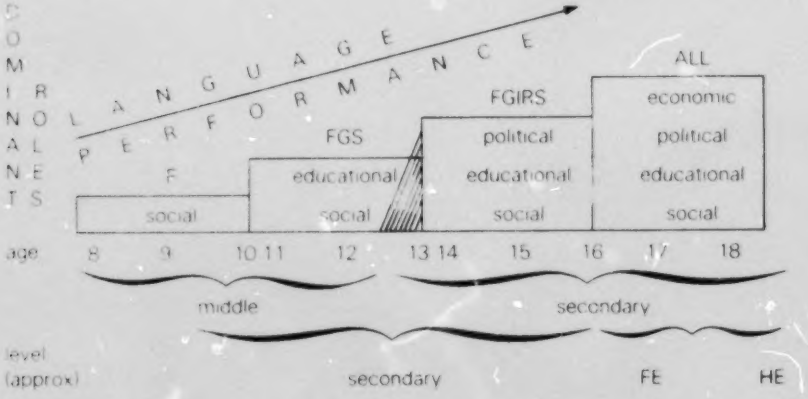
ten and eleven and thus make available the increased learning time which research indicates as crucial to success (BALT)

By developing these and associated themes it is possible to construct a model for language teaching throughout the educational system. Although each of the four suggested roles of language study may be questioned, they do provide the beginnings of a conceptual framework within which we may consider the priorities that might or should be accorded to non-native languages at all levels of education in Britain.

Some suggested models

I. Language/role priorities model

The four roles of language study are plotted in order of importance against age-group of learner (educational level) and language. The order of the developmental roles — social and educational — is subject to controversy. Some commentators would prefer to see them combined throughout as a single socio-educational role.

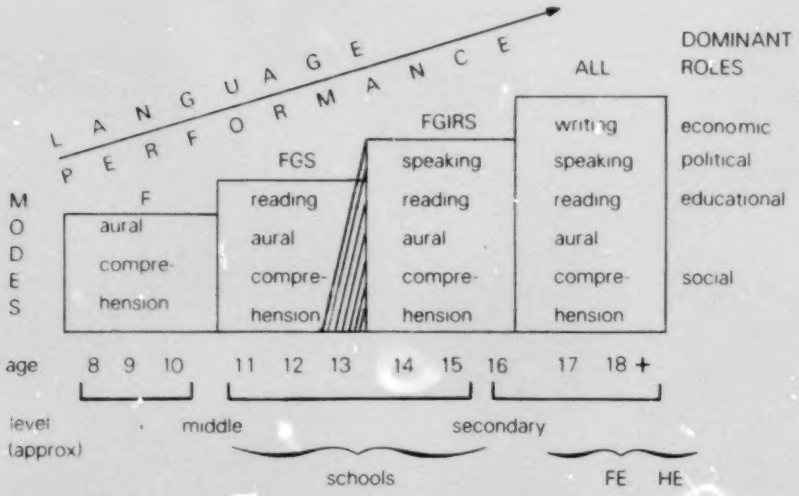


The roles are taken as cumulative. At each level the new dominant role is added to those of earlier levels. The choice of French for age range eight to ten is based on logistic grounds. Elsewhere the languages indicated are considered suitable and possible in existing circumstances, either severally or in various combinations (*see* Model III)

It is understood that the relative importance of roles *within* age-groups is partly a function of socio-economic background and of language learning ability or aptitude. In Higher Education it is possible to see divergence in general between polytechnics, for which the above model holds good, and universities, for which the educational role may again replace the economic. A similar distinction is possible between Further Education (as above) and Adult Education (cf universities)

II. Language/mode priorities model

The four modes of language use (skills) and roles of language study are plotted against age-group and language



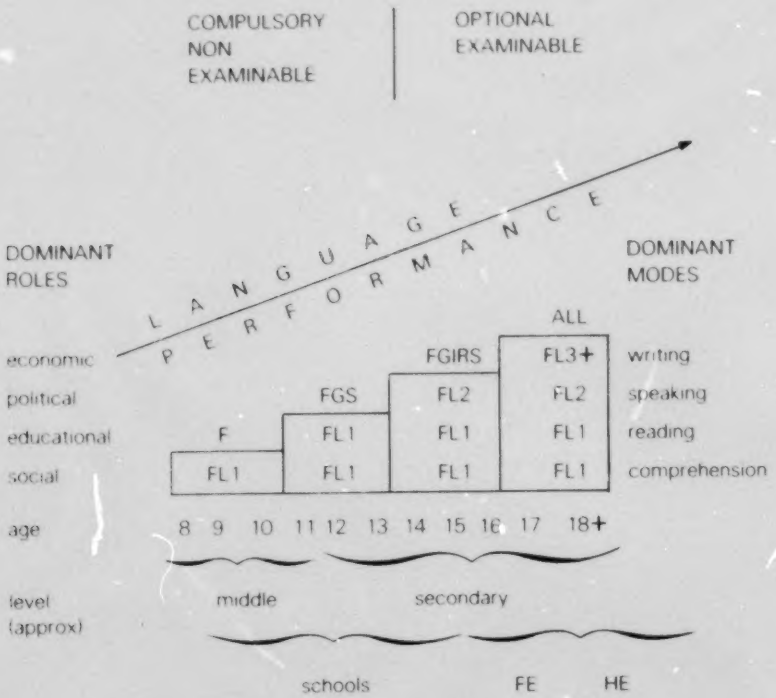
The mastery of skills (modes of language use) is taken as cumulative, though they are essentially inseparable. At each level the dominant mode is the additional desired end-product, receiving additional emphasis in the teaching.

End products should not be confused with means (methods): eg the model does *not* imply that oral use of language (speaking) should be deferred until age-range fourteen to sixteen, nor that writing should be deferred until age-range sixteen-plus. But it does imply the increased importance of those modes at those ages.

It is understood that the comparative importance of both skills and roles within age-groups is partly a function of the intelligence, aptitude and socio-economic background of the learner.

III. Language priorities model

Roles and skills are plotted against age-group of learner, language, number of languages and nature of course (compulsory/optional, non-examinable/examinable)



Language study is compulsory for the lower age-groups largely on social and generally educational grounds. The end-product is not measured in terms of language performance, the courses are not examined (by public examination). To fulfil social and educational roles, there is no merit in studying more than one language. FL2 is not therefore introduced until the pupil opts for it at age thirteen to fourteen. In the early age-group, the compulsory course falls within the age-range, it does not necessarily span it entirely. FL may be dropped during or after this stage. In the final age-group, the pupil has a clear vocational motive for language study and may select his language(s) accordingly.

Language distance

An inevitable and necessarily inconclusive argument concerns the degree of 'difficulty' of one foreign language as compared with another for the native English-speaker. It is suggested that this argument may be somewhat sharpened if the languages in question are considered at various different linguistic levels and sub-levels, eg

(a) phonological

(b) grammatical (morphology and syntax)

(c) lexical

(d) orthographic
sub-levels
(e) spelling

By comparing the languages at these levels from the point of view of the difficulties presented to the learner we may produce a demonstrable and communicable (if hardly scientific) basis for making at least tentative conclusions. For this purpose we may regard difficulty for the English learner as a function of distance from English.

1. As compared with English

The variation of distance from English at these levels is, of course, not susceptible of precise qualification except on a very coarse scale, nor would such a process necessarily be of any great value. However, if we take the five most commonly taught languages in the British educational system — French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish — we might, for instance, agree that in general Italian poses very few problems of pronunciation, and German only a few. French, on the other hand, presents a quite formidable series. Represented on a crude five-point scale, in which 1 represents the least difficulty/distance, an estimate of the five languages might give something like the following:

(a) phonological level

French	–	–	–	4	–
German	–	2	–	–	–
Italian	1	–	–	–	–
Russian	–	–	3	–	–
Spanish	–	2	–	–	–

At a grammatical level, the result might be different, with the Romance languages in one group, and German and Russian in another.

(b) grammatical level

French	–	2	–	–	–
German	–	–	3	–	–

Italian – 2 – – –

Russian – – 3 – –

Spanish – 2 – – –

At the lexical level, the three Romance languages might again form a group, but this time German and Russian would be different

(c) lexical level

French 1 – – – –

German – 2 – – –

Italian 1 – – – –

Russian – – – 4 –

Spanish 1 – – – –

From the point of view of orthography, Russian clearly presents problems that none of the others do, however, at the level of spelling the difficulties posed by French far outdistance the others, including Russian. The relationship between orthography and spelling may here require some clarification: in the case of Russian it is argued (sometimes to an exaggerated degree) that the spelling is completely 'phonetic', by which is meant that in general each symbol in the cyrillic alphabet represents one sound only. In French, on the other hand, the Latin alphabet is familiar but the possible variety of spelling of certain sounds and the use of diacritics, poses great problems to the English learner. The orthographic league table might therefore be as follows

(d) orthographic level

French 1 – – – –

German 1 – (3) – –

Italian 1 – – – –

Russian – – – 4 –

Spanish 1 – – – –

(The possible variant for German relates to whether or not the Gothic script is required, in general it is not.)

(e) spelling level

French – – – 4 –

German – 2 – – –

Italian 1 – – – –

Russian – 2 – – –

Spanish 1 – – – –

Expressed globally, ie as totals of the above we have an estimate of the relative distance from English of the five languages as

global distances

French – 12

German – 10 (12)

Italian – 6

Russian – 15

Spanish – 7

ie from the 'easiest' to the 'most difficult' — ISSFR, which contrasts interestingly with the pecking order — FGSRI — of those languages as taught in the UK in that it does not coincide at any single point.

The order of distance at the five levels, according to these estimates, is

phonological– I/S G/R F

grammatical– F/I/S G/R

lexical– F/I/S G R

orthographic– F/G/I/S R

spelling– I/S G/R F

— which is perhaps less informative except in suggesting that at no less than two of the five levels the 'most difficult' language is French.[2]

Such estimates are entirely informal and intended largely to suggest only a method of regarding difficulty. On the other hand, they are not entirely arbitrary, being based on experience. Indeed, it may well be that a poll of such options would provide as good an estimate as any 'scientific' measurement techniques.[3]

All five languages so far mentioned have in common the fact that they are European[4], and the distances between them, though real, are limited. Other Indo-European languages, such as the north Indian group, may have a degree of theoretical/philological proximity, but this is more apparent than real — or perhaps more real than apparent to the learner! On the sort of crude scale instanced above they would all appear — at least on most levels — at the extreme end of the scale as sub-divisions of grade 5, together with such non Indo-European languages as Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Swahili, Malay etc.[5] The one level at which the distance may be short enough to appear on the same scale as FGIRS is the phonological. It may certainly be argued that Japanese, for example, presents fewer difficulties at this level than, say, French, on the other hand it presents writing difficulties of an extreme kind and these are in no sense alleviated by compensatory simplicity of spelling.

The five levels suggested as a basis for viewing language distance are of course, capable of refinement in several ways, and for certain 'exotic' languages other levels may also have to be considered. The feature of formal styles in Japanese, for example, has no direct equivalent in any European language. However, such features tend in fact to reflect socio-cultural phenomena and are therefore dealt with as aspects of cultural distance rather than purely linguistic ones.

2. As compared with each other

Though the historical proximity of the Indo-European languages may be more theoretical than visible to any but the philologist, the relationship between languages in the Romance group is obvious even to the untrained eye, and to varying degrees this is also true of the languages in the Teutonic, Slavonic and Celtic groups.[6] The importance of this phenomenon of related groups or clusters of languages is very great for the language learner, for if the distance between English and Russian for example, is quite large, but the distance between Russian and Bulgarian is much shorter, then the distance between English and Bulgarian will — for the English speaker who knows Russian — be correspondingly shortened.[7] What is true of the Indo-European sub-groups may also be said of the Semitic languages, the Bantu languages etc, and such a line of reasoning has contributed to the development of the concept of cognate or 'related' languages as an element in curriculum planning.[8]

Clearly enthusiasts for any language will wish to have that language studied in its own right, and the idea of having it as an appendage to another arouses considerable passions, but the various constraints discussed elsewhere in this paper make it unlikely that many of the languages in question will ever be awarded more than a subordinate place in the curriculum for any but the favoured few. In such circumstances the idea of using one language in a group as a springboard for access to others is undoubtedly a useful one. It is probable that factors other than the position of a given language within a group will usually determine whether or not it is to be included in the curriculum, but if one language in a group is already being studied, the problem of language distance between English and the other members of the group is certainly diminished, and this might in some cases be a powerful argument in deciding second or third foreign languages. The implications of this approach for methodology, materials design etc should not, of course, be under-estimated.

Conclusion

Consideration of language distance as a way of assessing comparative difficulty, we may conclude, though by no means a precise system of measurement can in fact provide a logical framework within which informed opinion and experience may be weighed. Decisions concerning which languages are to be taught are often — perhaps usually — taken on the basis of essentially extra-linguistic criteria. Moreover, it is no doubt an unworthy suggestion that the language offered to any would-be language learner should necessarily be the 'easiest'. Even so, if evidence of this type were sought to support many current practices, especially at school level, we might well discover that some of them are based on very unconvincing premises.

Cultural distance

An important factor in language performance is cultural reference, since ignorance of a foreign culture will inhibit communication in the foreign language. Recognition of this fact accounts for preoccupation with matters of *civilisation / Landeskunde / stranovedeniye* in many modern school courses. Once again it might help if we look at culture at several levels, eg

(a) race and colour
(b) religious/philosophical
(c) political/ideological
(d) socio-economic
(e) geographical

The precise scope of such categories may vary, but it is probable that the variations will again lie within certain quite clear parameters. The following are offered merely as examples.

(a) Race and colour

Perhaps the most extreme example of cultural distance is racial type as visible in terms of the colour of the skin. It is worth pointing out, for example, that a white Englishman, no matter how he may command the language, will normally be unable to pass as a Chinese because, quite simply, he will not look like one! Unlike the student of another European language, he is prevented from ever becoming fully accepted into the foreign linguistic community. Indeed, the foreigner who is visibly of another race may well be thought to be invading a kind of racial preserve unless his foreign-ness is obvious also in his speech. This will have implications for his linguistic behaviour, especially in certain informal modes of speech. Several participants at a recent CILT conference spoke of something akin to resentment evoked amongst members of other ethnic groups by Englishmen with *too good a command* of their languages! Conversely, one spoke of the sense of incongruity he experienced on being addressed as 'old boy' by a Japanese businessman.

(b) Religious/philosophical distance

Even with such an area as Christian Europe, differences of religio-philosophical orientation have to be reckoned with in any study of cultural behaviour, including the study of languages. In this, as in many aspects of the life of European countries, the operative axis is probably north/south. The clericism and anti-clericism of the French are equally incomprehensible to the Englishman, for whom the natural creed is Protestant but in whose daily life the church plays little part. Transported to Catholic Spain, southern Italy or even the Irish Republic he must develop a sensitivity to such matters if he is to master the niceties of much linguistic usage or, especially, to understand the practices of educational planning, in which the line between religious and political motives may be invisible to the untutored eye. At the Brussels conference of Russianists of the EEC countries in May 1974 it became clear that the greatest community of problems are shared by the Italians and the Irish, for whom Russian is not available in the school curriculum nor tested in the public examinations — in

both cases because of the opposition of the Church. The problems that may arise *within one country* (Belgium), where differences which include religion and language are compounded, were also highlighted. In general, Russian is taught in the Protestant but not in the Catholic areas.

But if Catholicism (of both Eastern and Western varieties) and Protestantism pose problems of cultural distance for the language learner within Europe, how much more so do such creeds as Islam, Hinduism etc, in which religious practice and thought are so pervasive that mastery of linguistic usage at any but the most banal or narrowly technical content-level is rendered virtually impossible without a study, at the same time of the religious and philosophical ambience.

It is probably not necessary to develop the topic of religio-philosophical distance further at this point. Its importance is that it illustrates that the study of a non-European language may demand a degree of support in the study of the associated culture that transforms the problem of language learning into a task of quite a different order, requiring resources not normally at the disposal of the language teacher.

(c) Political/ideological distance

Closely allied to the religio-philosophical aspect, sometimes more subtly, sometimes blatantly grafted on in recent times, is the factor of ideology and its embodiment in political systems, this time on a generally east/west axis. The English student of contemporary Russian, for instance, once he leaves the familiar territory of nineteenth century literature, will flounder in a morass of Marxist-Leninist terminology and jargon, unless he can discern the stepping stones of dogma along which to thread his way. Without a knowledge of the accreted connotations of the lexis and of the structure of Soviet society he will find much contemporary usage as 'alien and strange' as its founding father predicted. The Soviet Union, in fact, provides a possibly unique example of a linguistic community which is both linguistically and culturally close, except at the ideological level in modern times, which puts it in a sort of halfway position between the Western European languages and those sharing a Marxist ideology in, for example, China, which at every other cultural level is vastly distant from both the West and the Russians.

(d) Socio-economic distance

A further important aspect of the cultural context of many non-European languages is the status of the society in the socio-economic sense of being developed or developing. For the urban English student, the problems of developing countries may also demand study of extra-linguistic subjects. Moreover, they may introduce a new element of difficulty since — unlike the problems of philosophy and ideology — a proper understanding of economic factors, if only in their social and socio-linguistic aspects, demands a degree of numeracy that the other subjects do not. Thus the context in which the language has to be seen is increasingly one of the social sciences as well as of the humanities.

(e) Geographical distance

Perhaps no discussion of distance can be complete without some mention of the geographical dimension, though the factors separating many of the languages may be more properly temporal rather than spatial at some levels. (An outstanding example of this feature is provided by the Celtic languages, which historically are not so much neighbours of English as decayed native tongues of large sections of the predominantly English-speaking population of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.)

From the point of view of English speaking countries other than the United Kingdom (eg. Australia or the USA) the geographical factor will clearly lead to different conclusions. From the viewpoint of the UK, however, it seems that (Celtic languages apart) both linguistic and cultural distance will tend to increase in more or less direct proportion to geographical distance, and this perhaps not surprising fact is extremely important in language planning in determining certain aspects of the accessibility of those foreign cultures which are essential keys to mastery of the languages concerned.

Conclusion

A consideration of cultural distance, then, even more than of language distance (insofar as the distinction is a real one) seems to lead to one vital conclusion: that the more distant a language is from that of the learner, the more support the language learner/teacher will require from other disciplines. Except, therefore, when the study of a distant foreign language is intended only as an intellectual stimulus, a means of imparting insights into the phenomenon of language in general, or as meeting very limited special purposes such as access to written sources within a narrow specialism, it must be seen as part of a broadly based area studies type course including elements of the humanities and the social sciences, and this will severely restrict its potential role in the curriculum below undergraduate or even graduate level. In a sense, this dictates a situation in which the tail may seem to be wagging the dog. An exceptional position in such a context is occupied by languages which are linguistically close and culturally close at every level except the ideological, such a position is occupied for native English-speakers by Russian. A common complaint of university students is that their courses of Russian language and literature do not treat in sufficient detail the Soviet period. Viewed from the point of view of ideological distance, this is quite understandable, for since 1917 the language/cultural distance of Russian from English has grown significantly *wider*.

Notes

[1]The concept of the 'native speaker' is itself a very broad one, spanning a wide spectrum of factors of personality, biography, socio-economic background, education etc. Moreover, the majority of native English-speakers do not inhabit the United Kingdom, a fact which introduces further levels of difference. However, all these differences/distances lie within certain parameters expressed here most simply by the statement that the native language of the speakers concerned is a form of English and not a form of any other language.

[4]Another obviously relevant conclusion is that language distance may vary according to mode use (skill): if this were taken into account in differentiating objectives, we would probably find that we have a much wider series of options than merely the choice of one language out of five.

[5]It is not here proposed to discuss the justification of the present predominance of French in the school curriculum, but if one believes, with Burstall (*Primary French in the balance* NFER, 1975) that one of the most important elements in language learning is visible success, then it might seem that to aim at 'French for everyone' (including the 'less able') might not be the wisest of courses.

[6]A vitally important factor here is that of cultural distance (see page 23).

[7]In such sub-divisions the languages included might well be seen to be quite distant at various levels from each other, but the importance for the present discussion is that compared with FGIRS they are all more distant from English.

[8]This is a strong argument in favour of the retention or reinstatement of courses of comparative philology, labelled — if fashion so insists — historical linguistics or simply 'language'.

[9]See M. Holman's article on the teaching of Bulgarian to Russianists at Leeds. The idea of 'knowing' a language is of course a vague one; here it implies that to the extent that a student has learned Russian, the distance he has to span to learn Bulgarian has been lessened. (Holman, M.J. de K. 'Bulgarian at Leeds' in CILT Reports and Papers 12: *Less commonly taught languages: resources and problems*. CILT, 1975.)

[10]See A. Dobson's article on the teaching of Portuguese at Wolverhampton Polytechnic in the same volume.

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2. The linguistic needs of pupils

E.W. Hawkins

The curriculum: What are schools for?

How does one justify the place of any particular subject in the curriculum? Certainly not simply by philosophical argument. The wisest among our educational philosophers accept that it is impossible to define the content of the curriculum on purely philosophical grounds. The doyen of English educational philosophers, R.S. Peters, concludes: 'I think it is possible to produce arguments to show why some sorts of pursuits are more worthwhile than others ... to produce some ethical foundations for education ... But what I think a philosopher cannot do, qua philosopher, is to pronounce on the relative weight to be attached to such principles, to proclaim that, for example, literature is more important than science ... Philosophy has an important contribution to make to practical wisdom, but it is no substitute for it.' (Peters, 1973)

We might note, in parenthesis, that when philosophers of education have attempted to prescribe a particular content for the school curriculum, they have not always avoided the pitfall indicated by J. Woods in his commentary on Peters' essay in the same symposium. He points out that the answers any philosopher of education arrives at will depend on his approach to '... the question, whose concepts the philosopher conceives himself as analysing in order to make this distinctive contribution to educational theory.' An instructive example of an argument based on an inadequate concept of foreign language learning is offered by J.P. White, another educational philosopher of the London school.[1] White included in his compulsory curriculum (to be confined to the morning of each schoolday) 'category 1 activities', defined as those of which 'no understanding is possible without engaging in them'. Such (compulsory) subjects are contrasted with 'category 2 activities' of which some understanding is logically possible without engaging in them. These subjects White would relegate to the (optional) afternoon timetable. The first such subject on White's list is 'speaking a foreign language'. 'Provided that one speaks one language, eg English, one can gain some understanding of what it is for other people to speak another, even though one cannot do so oneself.' But few foreign language teachers would accept White's concept of their discipline. White sees the aim of foreign language teaching as 'producing bilinguals'. It is part of 'training' not of 'education'. His relegation of the subject to 'category 2' follows fairly logically from his faulty premise (for which he produces no argument). His conclusions about the curriculum spring from his concept of foreign language teaching as simply training in a skill.

A very different view, and one taken in this paper, is that it is an essential experience which should form part of every pupil's *education*, even though the study is not taken to a high level. The main aim is not to produce bilinguals, nor even primarily to teach a skill, but to offer, through teaching the skill, a linguistic experience different from the pupil's experience of the mother tongue, to help the pupil understand what living in a polyglot world implies.

Clearly it is going to make a difference to the argument which concept of foreign language teaching we start from, but however conceived, how do we justify giving the subject a place in the curriculum? Basically on political grounds if our concern is with state schools in a free, democratic society. Though the philosophers can help us to disentangle their implications, nearly all educational decisions in a democracy are (rightly enough) political decisions. In a society or a school which is built on a particular philosophical or, more commonly, religious foundation the conceptual difficulty is less perplexing. It is accepted that the overriding justification of the preferred curriculum is that it transmits and re-interprets to every new generation the revealed truth as enshrined in a book, a prophet or a church. This would certainly be the view of the curriculum taken in a Moslem community where beliefs are inextricably intertwined with every aspect of daily life, clothing, diet, family relationships, marriage, leisure activities etc. It is also presumably the view which underlies the tenacity with which rival Christian communities cling to their own segregated, sectarian schools.

In communities and schools, however, where the truth is not 'revealed' but in which every choice and decision has to be worked out painfully in each generation in the light of experience, educational decisions can in the last resort only be justified by political objectives. These in turn follow from the political ideals accepted by the community which administers (and pays for) the schools. The crucial political decision made by our community which affects the curriculum is that we have decided to go for democracy, however far off the objective may appear to be. From this it follows that a main aim of schooling must be to make pupils as nearly autonomous as individuals as they have it in them to be. An essential test of the curriculum, therefore, and one that we must try to apply to language teaching, is: how far does the activity contribute to liberating pupils from constraints on their autonomy?

The possible contraints are many. The history of the intervention of the state in education, especially in the past hundred years, has been the constant reappraisal of priorities in the effort to set children free from limitations on their freedom to develop into autonomous citizens of the democracy. If this is considered to be an over-optimistic view of some aspects of educational progress in recent years, at least it will be accepted as a fair statement of the intentions of the great legislators, Morant, Sadler, Butler and Chuter Ede at the turning points of 1902, 1918, 1944. For them and all who worked to implement their great Education Acts the obvious restraint on autonomy was ignorance. With ignorance went lack of the techniques and skills to operate or earn a living in the complex society into which we had blundered. Ability to survive and earn a living are not enough for autonomy without access to the accumulated expertise and discoveries of the community (and of the wider world) stored in its libraries, museums and universities. None of these brings liberty without, not simply the right, but the capacity for free expression. The indispensable key to unlock the door is effective and accurate mastery of *language*. Generations of children set free from such constraints as ignorance, lack of skills and lack of the language through which to learn, by winning scarce places in state schools of growing power in the first half of this century gave promise of what the democracy might be like if all or most of its children could unlock the linguistic and conceptual doors.

Sadly, as devoted schoolteachers and administrators began to win the battle which took ignorance as the main enemy, another kind of constraint on autonomy, much more difficult to contend with, has been revealed. It was the ending of selection at eleven that exposed it, for the selection process had earlier disguised its working to all but a few researchers. It can be summarised as *parental inadequacy*. It is now clear that adults differ very greatly in their capacity to fulfil the most demanding of all roles in our society, namely the capacity to be an effective parent. This can only be learnt at present by the fortunate accident of experience in a real home. The real hazard now for children is to draw an unlucky ticket in the lottery of parental effectiveness. The way in which one generation of inadequate parents trains another infallibly to take its place has been amply shown within the last decade by researches such as the Plowden survey of parental attitudes (Central Advisory Council for Education, 1967) and by the work of Mia Kelmer Pringle (1971). The effect of parents' example and behaviour on children's life chances greatly limits or defeats the efforts of the most devoted teachers. In order to be able to profit from school the child needs a parent who is willing to give time to being a parent, who is responsible and who offers a model of how a mature adult behaves. It is not a matter of knowledge or wealth (though wealth can help by purchasing substitute care from housemaster or house mother). The implications of this for the state school and the ideal of the comprehensive school have yet to be discussed nationally in any depth, but it seems certain that education for parenthood must be one of the main challenges awaiting schools in the last decades of this century. Another must surely be to find ways to involve adults, both young and not so young, in a variety of supportive roles repaying 'adult time' to children who have been deprived of it by the lottery of parental ineffectiveness. In such programmes it is certain that language will be the central concern.

We have spoken so far of a curriculum which unlocks the linguistic and conceptual doors limiting freedom. But a curriculum for freedom must also challenge some values which are exemplified in the homes of many pupils. The effective parent will always hope that the school will transcend the home horizons. Confident family relationships, regardless of the wealth or intellect of the parents, have provided sure foundations from which many pupils have set out to explore the world and their own powers. But some home influences imprison children's minds in ways just as unacceptable as imprisonment of their bodies would be. The school must challenge, for instance, racial prejudice as it should challenge other kinds of prejudice and dogma, eg on both sides of the Belfast divide. 'Parental choice' cannot always be sacrosanct, though when the school can work with and through parents the results are so much more fruitful and lasting.

The curriculum must face other challenges. When the family fails to build strong bonds of respect and affection or to offer mature models of behaviour to adolescents, the pull of the peer-group gang becomes the predominant influence. The hallmark of the gang is insecurity, which breeds prejudice, resentment. The insecure member of the gang overreacts, in language, clothing and behaviour, to make sure of acceptance. Insecurity in adolescence is a fertile ground for the growth of racial and colour prejudice for the same reasons that it is inimical to the sympathetic study of foreign

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languages and cultures whose very strangeness is a challenge to the parochial culture to which the insecure adolescent clings in self protection.

We have sketched so far a curriculum aiming for avowedly political reasons at developing autonomous citizens, a curriculum both liberating and challenging, in which the study of language must be central. It is of course the conceptual journey of the curriculum which is liberating not language in a vacuum, but language is the key that will unlock the doors to most of the experiences which are truly liberating: literature, the experimental techniques of the natural sciences, mathematics, geography and history (in the hands of exceptional teachers). Art and craftmanship can be liberating, as can music, but language remains essential for reflecting on or communicating artistic or aesthetic experience. A subject which might but at present rarely does make a great contribution is moral education, if this were planned as a progressively hard apprenticeship in making choices, in learning how one's choices affect others and sometimes having to live with the effects of one's choices for long enough at least to learn wisdom and not simply cleverness from schooling. Nevertheless the essential characteristics of the human animal is that he/she is an 'articulate mammal' in Jean Aitchison's phrase (1976). Unfortunately some children arrive in school with a linguistic key which will not unlock many of the doors. They are, like the chaffinches in Thorpe and Zangwill's experiments, removed from the mother bird for a crucial interval 'songbirds who never learn to sing' (1961).

Notions of linguistic deprivation have been unpopular among linguists, especially those who accepted Noam Chomsky's view. This was based on *a priori* reasoning rather than on close observation of children acquiring their language. Typical of this view was the statement by Chomsky (1959): '... all normal children acquire essentially comparable grammars of great complexity with remarkable rapidity'.

The view was echoed by Lenneberg (1967): 'Because latent structure is replicated in every child and because all languages must have an inner form of identical type ... every child may learn any language with equal ease ... Nor is there any evidence that the adults surrounding the child are the causative or shaping agents that determine language onset or his course of development'.

A different approach to linguistic handicap is suggested by a mass of evidence from the researches of linguists and psychologists who have listened sensitively to children rather than relying on *a priori* arguments. Margaret Donaldson sums up recent work (1978) in this field: 'In the early stages, before the child has developed a full awareness of language, language is embedded for him in the flow of events which accompany it. So long as this is the case, the child does not interpret words in isolation — he interprets situations. He is more concerned to make sense of what people do when they talk and act than to decide what words mean. ... What is going to be required for success in our educational system is that he should learn to turn language and thought in upon themselves. ... He must become capable of manipulating symbols. Now the principal symbolic system to which the pre-school child has access is oral language. So the first step is the step of conceptualising language — becoming aware of it as a separate structure, freeing it from its embeddedness in events.

Some children come to school with this step already taken — or at least with the movement already begun. They come with an enormous initial advantage. In some homes awareness of the spoken word is greatly encouraged. Some parents talk *about* words to their children, play word games with them and so on. But most talk only *with* words. Indeed a great many children come to school not even aware that separate words exist — that the flow of speech can be broken up into these units. Many five-year-olds have very confused notions of what is meant by the word 'word', as Jess Reid showed in a highly original study of the conceptions of the reading process which children bring with them to school.

Margaret Donaldson quotes work by Bärbel Inhelder which shows that children from privileged backgrounds have a different attitude to language: they are more likely to pay scrupulous attention to the words of the question than children from less privileged backgrounds. It is when such children face the transition to reading that their 'unawareness' of language shows most clearly. The picture given by Margaret Donaldson has many similarities to the conclusions of Joan Tough who has noted how differences in children's home background affect the expectations they have of what language can do (1973). Linguistic disadvantage can take other forms. Derek Bickerton discusses the situation of the 'child of speakers of an unstable pidgin in a displaced community where ancestral languages are of very limited utility'. He argues: 'If the situation of the pidgin speaker is one of handicapped *second*-language learning, then that of the first-generation creole speaker is surely one of handicapped *first* language learning' (1977). The handicap in this case is to be offered an 'inadequate linguistic input' from which to learn language. Yet another kind of language handicap has been discussed by Douglas Barnes (1971) who has shown how lack of the 'language of secondary education' proves a barrier to the grasp of concepts which, eg, the science teacher tries to convey to adolescents.

It is sometimes argued by those who reject the concept of linguistic deprivation that the evidence only points to linguistic difference and that difference only becomes deprivation because of the demands of a school system which is biased against certain children's language and culture. Every teacher who is adequately trained to listen to children's speech will be sensitive to this possibility and guard against falsely categorising some children's accents, vocabulary etc. Nevertheless Margaret Donaldson's evidence shows that even learning the basic skills of reading and writing depends on the prior disembedding of language from its context and that in this some children are helped, some handicapped, by their home environment. Unless we are to pretend that illiteracy does not gravely diminish a child's autonomy and life chances in our culture we are forced to conclude that difference here does equal disadvantage and that the difference argument comes close to a cruel quibble which does no service to the children concerned but can confuse teachers and administrators who are trying to help them.

The recognition that language is central and that many children, because of their background do need special help, was one of the main themes of the Bullock Report (Committee of Inquiry into Reading and Use of English, 1975) whose 600 pages are packed with useful guidance for the teacher. Yet in one respect the report was disappointing for nowhere does it discuss another kind of linguistic disadvantage,

that of the pupil confined within his monoglot view of the universe, unaware in linguistic terms that the world is round. Nowhere in the report is there any recognition that the pupils whose 'language for life' is so vital, are going to spend their lives in ever closer interaction with neighbours who speak interesting foreign languages. 'Language across the curriculum' turns out to be language only part-way across the curriculum, for no mention is made of the contribution to the pupil's education of the other language(s) on his timetable. A linguistic education in the modern world which did not challenge the pupil to try to understand the implications of cooperating with language communities very different from his own would surely merit the adjective 'deprived'.

The danger of allowing pupils to remain monolingual has been described by Yuen Ren Chao.[2] The monolingual is at risk, he says, of succumbing without knowing it to the 'magical view of language':

> Monolingual persons take language so much for granted they often forget its arbitrary nature and cannot distinguish words from things. Thus, primitive peoples often believe that putting a curse on somebody's name could actually harm his person. Persons unused to foreign languages tend to find something perverse in the way foreigners talk. ... The story is told of an English woman who always wondered why the French call water *de l'eau*, the Italians call it *dell'acqua* and the Germans call it *das Wasser*. "Only we English people" she said, "call it properly water. We not only call it water, but it is water."

It is especially the less able pupil and the pupil from the insecure background who finds it difficult to escape from the magical view of language and who most needs help from school.

The linguistic education we are looking for must obviously build on the traditions we know of mother tongue teaching and foreign language teaching, but the contribution each makes to setting children free must be re-thought and in the rest of this paper an attempt is made to outline a possible new approach at primary and secondary levels and beyond. In particular, the special linguistic needs of pupils at different ages are examined and the case is developed for recognised 'learning how to learn' and 'language apprenticeship' phases leading to rapid acquisition of (chosen) foreign languages in late adolescence through intensive and reciprocal courses.

A theme common to both these sections is the need for closer collaboration between teachers of the mother tongue and teachers of foreign languages, including the breakdown of the rigid compartments in which they are now educated and professionally trained, so that mother tongue teachers share foreign language work and *vice versa*. As a further measure to throw a bridge across the 'space between' these two parts of the language curriculum it is suggested that at secondary level 'language' as a subject in its own right should have a place. Perhaps the chief point to be made is that the linguistic education of children should be planned as a coherent, continuous process from the pre-school state up to sixteen-plus and beyond. The paper is intended as an attempt to see what such a coherent programme might look like.

The primary stage

Mother tongue

There is no need to repeat the recommendations on mother tongue teaching set out so persuasively in the Plowden Report, still less to do other than hope for early implementation of the authoritative and positive Bullock recommendations. There are, however, questions to ask which are not discussed in Plowden or Bullock and to which research should be directed. One concerns aptitude for language learning. We have some measures for aptitude for foreign language acquisition. Are the differences that have been observed between learners to be explained as mainly due to genetic or environmental causes? And do similar differences affect acquisition of the mother tongue? If some language disabilities are learned rather than innate, what ought school programmes or parents, or both in concert, to be doing to help? Is it too late by the age of five and ought the emphasis to be put on parent/child interaction in the pre-school years as Gina Armstrong's project in South Yorkshire suggests? (in Halsey's *Educational priority*, 1972). Is there a role for 'ear education' as suggested by Furth and Wachs? (1974). Might this help to reduce the tragically high numbers of pupils who transfer from primary to secondary school (and the inexcusable proportion who leave at sixteen) still unable to read a book for interest or pleasure or to get the sense out of a newspaper story beyond the headline? What is the effect on mother tongue acquisition of learning a foreign language? Does the foreign language positively contribute to strengthening flexibility, exactness and 'awareness' of the mother tongue as many teachers have observed? These are questions more deserving of scarce research resources than many of the topics on which so much precious post-graduate time is currently spent.

A foreign language in the primary school?

'Learning how to learn a language' rather than 'French from eight'

Studying a foreign language in an English speaking environment presents special difficulties which are not faced by any other subject in the curriculum. In all other classroom activities the pupil can expect to find examples, models of performance, shared experience outside the classroom, at home with parents, on TV, in talk with school friends out in jobs etc. Only in the foreign language is the experience almost entirely confined to lesson times. This is especially true for most pupils' discussion with parents at home. They can discuss most school subjects (the science experiment, the sewing or cookery class, maths problems, the geography or history lesson etc) with parents who can contribute from their experience in job or leisure interest. For most parents however (probably at least 75 per cent) a foreign language was never part of their schooling and they naturally give it a low priority.

Unlike the mother tongue the foreign language, particularly for the first few years, cannot be used to satisfy the learner's genuine felt needs. 'Speech acts' in the foreign language are not, as John Searle (1969) pointed out, 'serious' speech acts. They do not contain the element of 'intention to say' that Slobin and Welsh (1973) have identified as the dynamo behind so much of the progress children make in their mastery of the mother tongue. Both teacher and pupil are aware, while using the

foreign language, that the mother tongue is there waiting to be used for serious communication or to satisfy real needs. Much of the time the linguistic interaction is not so much performance as mere rehearsal against the time when the language will be truly needed. This time will be perhaps when the pupil goes abroad or when he needs some information which can only be got from a book or article in the language and this for many pupils must seem a long way off.

It is necessary to face these special difficulties rather than proceed as if they were not there. They compel us to recognise that classroom learning of, say, French in an otherwise entirely English environment for a few short lessons each week, should be seen as only the first part of a two-part process. This would not imply that it is any less important than later stages but simply that it is not complete in itself. It is a stage for laying foundations, an apprenticeship rather than true acquisition. Rapid acquisition will come later when career or leisure interests prompt an informed choice of which language to work at among the many that may be on offer in intensive courses. This is in fact not so revolutionary a proposal as it may seem. Most modern language specialists who went through the traditional grammar school course will agree that it was not until they went abroad and began to use their language to meet real needs (stage two of our two-part process) that they made real progress. If these two stages were more clearly recognised it would make for clearer thinking about what to expect from the first stage and how to assess the apprenticeship.

This division of the process into two stages is indicated for another reason. It is impossible to predict, when pupils begin their foreign language studies, which of a number of languages any particular pupil will eventually need for career or leisure purposes. Contrast the situation in (say) Sweden where it can be predicted that whatever they do later in life all young Swedes are going to need the world vehicle language English. Most of our pupils speak the world vehicle language as their mother tongue. The choice of a first foreign language is much more difficult. This is one reason why it is a mistake to seek to justify offering a foreign language to secondary school pupils on grounds of need (either national or individual) for a particular language. It does mean that whichever language is chosen its role as part of an apprenticeship in language learning should be uppermost in the teacher's mind.

Within such a two-stage model the first (apprenticeship) stage can be prepared for in the primary school by a programme of 'learning how to learn' language in which education of the ear will have an important part. All pupils can benefit from well-planned 'learning how to learn language' in the primary school, but there are some pupils whose need is acute. These are the pupils described by Margaret Donaldson who have not developed 'awareness of language' and the control of language which, as she shows, is very closely related to awareness. The difficulty such children have in disembedding language from its context affects both the transition to reading in the mother tongue and the learning of a foreign language. Children who have this difficulty are also likely to have some horizons that are limited and are less likely to get help in sustaining expectations when the learning becomes hard. To plunge such pupils into learning a foreign language without trying to equip them with the learning tools and expectations they will need is to ask for disappointment.

A possible programme

Education of the ear

Most pupils need systematic and progressive training in discriminating listening to help them to hear sounds, stress, rhythm and intonation patterns that are unfamiliar to them and to make learning via the ear a more enjoyable experience. This part of the course should be worked out with music teachers and English teachers as an integrated course in 'learning how to hear'. The way in which children are conditioned in self-defence to 'switch off' is discussed by Furth and Wachs. They have some imaginative suggestions for classroom games to teach children to 'think with their ears'. Work on possible primary school ear education programmes has begun, eg at Leed University under MacCarthy of the Department of Phonetics, and by Dr Wisbey in her radio broadcasts on *Woman's hour* which aroused wide interest. The staffing implications of such a programme would be important. Since all primary teachers are concerned with the mother tongue, it would be reasonable to include education of the ear in the initial college courses for all teachers, though teachers specialising in music, English and language in education would be responsible for elaborating joint schemes of work in their own schools. It would thus be possible for all class teachers to teach such a programme. It was one of the drawbacks of the French Pilot Scheme that French could not be included in the college course for all primary teachers. The contrast with Sweden referred to above where the need for English can be predicted for all children, is instructive. Whatever linguistic element is included in the primary school curriculum must be acceptable as a normal part of the professional training of the class teacher. Education of the ear could be seen not simply as interesting but as vital for all primary teachers.

Widening horizons and combating prejudice

Clare Burstall (1970 and 1974) has commented on the decline in the 'capacity for empathy' (the capacity to enter into the feelings and point of view of others), which occurs in many pupils with the onset of puberty. The decline is specially marked among boys and those from insecure backgrounds, who take refuge from insecurity in the gang-security and mutual respect of the peer group. Going to meet the foreign language, and those who speak it, makes demands on empathy which few other parts of the curriculum make. A determined effort is needed to set up expectations and sustain curiosity regarding what lies over the parochial horizon. Since the attitude of the parents always outweighs the influence of teachers in determining pupils' reactions, the main thrust of the school's effort in this area would be directed towards educating children *through* their parents. The challenge is to find ways of bringing parents into a partnership in awakening children's curiosity about the foreign countries with which our fortunes are now enmeshed. The essential thing is to arouse curiosity and to reassure parents that 'foreign' does not mean 'threatening'.

Setting up expectations for future learning

At the same time we should try to arm pupils with appropriate expectations about the learning tasks they will meet. For example, we know from work on aptitude testing that languages are learnt more quickly by pupils who can readily spot similarities and differences of a quite simple, surface kind between new language met

and words and phrases met previously. Spotting these new patterns in language or recognising them as met before depends on having appropriate expectations and these must be learnt. We need to forearm with knowledge of what to look for those pupils who aren't quick at processing incoming patterns of speech. This can be done by systematic and progressive games in which pupils are challenged to spot the pattern and then create, with increasing confidence, new bits that fit the pattern.

Transition to reading

The other main learning technique to be mastered is accurate matching of new sounds to the written symbols which represent them. This is the crux of the transition to reading. It is the step on which so many children stumble in their mother tongue. The proposals here for the primary school preparation for language learning programme could help children who have difficulty in the matching of sound and symbol on which reading depends. There is growing evidence that such training in a neutral, more logical medium (French, Spanish) builds slow readers' confidence in reading English. To sum up, the important learning steps in the preparation for language learning programme seem to be:

(i) education of the ear
(ii) combating prejudice
(iii) expecting and predicting pattern in speech
(iv) creating new bits by analogy
(v) matching sounds to written symbols.

These steps cannot be practised in a vacuum. This brings us to the most controversial of the primary pupil's linguistic needs, learning something of the speech of our European neighbours.

Exploring the phonology of one or more European (or ethnic minority) languages

If we see the education of the ear programme as beginning at age eight and continuing through the junior school years until eleven-plus, then from an early stage in the programme (the decision as to when to begin would be for teachers to make) the pupils will be ready to apply their sharpened listening to the exploration of one or more of the languages of their nearest European — or possibly ethnic minority — neighbours. The emphasis would be on accurate listening and speaking, with lots of doing and singing. The work might be based on simple dialogues and role-playing, involving counting, the clock, the calendar, shopping, parts of the body and everyday activities. The language work would be supported at first by lots of objects and doing (ie essentially ostensive or enactive rather than the so-called audio-visual method). Only when language had been practised enactively would pictures be introduced to cue responses and support dialogue. A rich supply of taped materials with a variety of listening exercises (spot the difference between teachers' actions and what is said on the tape) would ensure authentic models for children's pronunciation. When the phonology of the foreign language was firmly established (and very high standards of accuracy, as with musical training, would be essential), a second foreign language might be introduced and the first one put aside. The same programme of simple dialogues would be covered with, again, concentration on very high standards of accuracy in listening, speaking and singing. Some schools might prefer to keep to

one language. Others might even introduce a third. The important point would be that children should concentrate on using the new language(s) to experiment with their sharpened listening skills, their growing confidence in seeing pattern and their imaginative creation of new patterns by analogy. In schools attended by groups of children from ethnic minorities it would be most valuable, if suitable teachers could be recruited and trained, to introduce children to each other's languages as part of this listening experience, rather than confining the examples to the European languages.

Throughout this introduction to foreign language the emphasis should be on awakening and sustaining curiosity, insisting on very high standards of accuracy in listening and in speaking, making pupils feel at ease in thinking about the polyglot world and whetting appetites for the exploration to come in the secondary school, and in adult life.

Transition to secondary school

The Plowden Report devoted a whole chapter to 'Continuity and consistency between the stages of education'. In the decade since 1967 little progress has been made in improving such continuity. This is attested by the fact that the HMI Report (1977) and the DES Green Paper (1977) found it necessary to stress the urgency of the problem. In no area of the curriculum is the need for such continuity greater than in language study. Where it is not worked at consistently by teachers, on both sides of the primary/secondary divide, schools are failing the children. The history of the French Pilot Scheme is partly a story of breakdown of continuity at eleven-plus. The prime need of the pupil as he grows up in language learning is that his successive teachers should work together on clearly specified and agreed objectives, use a common terminology, observe each other's classes frequently, attend joint workshops, each know intimately the teaching materials that the other is using, report mutually and regularly on individual pupils. What is true of transition from stage to stage is equally true of transfer from one LEA to another or from one school to another part-way through the course. No school can be satisfied unless its arrangements for helping pupils who transfer into language courses late make provision for individual tuition. Such individual 'catching-up' work is excellent training for young student teachers in training. Colleges and UDEs should be prepared to make students available to schools in their areas for such work. The same considerations apply to pupils who miss school through sickness. Gaps in learning in a linear subject such as a foreign language, where one week's work builds on the work previously covered, lead to bewilderment and loss of confidence and to drop-out.

The secondary stage

At secondary level while the study of the mother tongue extends to embrace the language of secondary education and apprenticeship in a foreign language begins, a third element must be added. This is the study of the role of language as the uniquely human characteristic, whose development underpins all human evolution and achievement. The arguments for giving language a place in the curriculum have been set out

in a paper published elsewhere and need not be repeated here, except to stress two points. The Bullock Report advocates language across the curriculum but many of its recommendations, especially those concerned with introducing adolescents, before they leave school, to the responsible role of young parents in their children's acquisition of language, call for teachers specially trained in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. It is not clear how such specialists will become available in schools unless the teaching of language as a subject in its own right becomes established in the curriculum.

An important role of such a study would be to fill the vacuum which at present separates the teaching of the mother tongue from the foreign language (CILT Reports and Papers 10, 1974). The average pupil at present finds on his timetable two subjects, mother tongue and foreign language, taught with no reference to each other, by two different teachers, each of whom has had a distinct specialist training, in the course of which they have seldom met, seldom exchanged ideas, and each of whom uses a grammatical terminology which may lead to the pupil being asked to attach different concepts to the same linguistic label. Worst of all, perhaps, the two different teachers seem, in most schools, to find few occasions for dialogue either in the classroom or outside it, except possibly in enlightened sixth forms when pupils are reading set-book programmes for 'A' levels in the two languages which offer fruitful comparisons. (As for hoping that those who set the texts to be studied at 'A' level might consult together so that reading programmes might be more coherent in (say) English and French, mere contemplation of the idea reminds us in what sealed-off compartments the mother tongue and the foreign languages are taught and examined.)

The concept of the linguistic 'trivium' which we are proposing would encourage discussion among the mixed teams of teachers (teachers of English and teachers of the foreign languages) who would jointly prepare the syllabus for the language element. They would look for ways of encouraging pupils to bring into class examples of language in both mother tongue and foreign language to exemplify or challenge the linguistic rules emerging from their language study.

Teaching in the mother tongue

The adult literacy campaign has alerted public opinion to the possibility that two million adults in Britain may be functionally illiterate. K. Gardner (in N. Smart (editor) *Crisis in the classroom*, 1968) estimates that '25 per cent of pupils at present leave school insufficiently adept at reading to cope adequately with a daily newspaper'. This challenge was the subject of three years' deliberation by the Bullock Committee and it would be presumptuous to try to improve on its findings. However, there are reservations to be made. Some have already been touched on, such as the apparent failure to think through suggestions regarding the teaching of language in the curriculum, and the absence of any reference throughout the report to the fact that it is language for life in a polyglot world that schools must offer.

It is consistent with the parochialism of Bullock that it does not consider the possibility of moving away from the present pattern of teacher education, in which English teachers offer only English and modern language teachers know nothing of mother tongue teaching, towards a pattern in which, at least in the lower forms, the

foreign language and English would be taught by the same teacher. This would have many advantages. At a time when school rolls are falling it would certainly mean that there was greater flexibility in arranging staffing if all, or most, teachers offered at least two subjects. For the foreign language teacher the advantages of having some lessons each week in which a dialogue in English was possible, at a level of interest and subtlety not possible in pupils' halting French or German, might be very attractive. It might go far to improve the personal relationships and mutual confidence that the language teacher was able to make with his pupils. It is sometimes forgotten under what handicap the language teacher works in this respect, how personal realtionships that count so much in the English lesson are inhibited in the foreign language lesson by the need to banish English from the all too short contact hours with pupils.

How would English teachers and foreign language teachers regard the suggestion? A big change in university degree patterns and in PGCE courses would be required as well as a national programme of in-service training. How would teachers at university react?

Teaching the foreign language

As we saw when discussing the primary stage an English-speaking adult's foreign language needs cannot be predicted at the age of eleven-plus or even fourteen-plus. The English-speaking pupil looks out on the whole wide polyglot world in which, someday, he or she may find a foreign language that is truly needed. But at school only one or two foreign languages can in practice be offered and the teacher has no way of gazing into the future and predicting which pupil will need a particular language, whether for a job, because of the subject he or she chooses to study at university, because of a leisure interest, marriage etc. We are, therefore, on uncertain ground if we claim that any given pupil or group of pupils will need French, German or Spanish etc. The secondary school foreign language policy should respond to *needs* that can be identified and safely predicted.

What can be predicted is that *some* foreign language, or languages, will be useful in adult life, either in work or leisure. The school, therefore, ought at least to give pupils an apprenticeship in *learning how to learn* a foreign language. It can be argued that the best apprenticeship is to learn a language. There is quite a lot of evidence to support this. But is one language better than another as an apprenticeship? For example, it is arguable that if the pupil is to learn a romance language, he would do better to start with Spanish than with French. The verb system of Spanish, it is claimed, matches the English better than the French, which has awkward contrasts with English[3]. Again the romance genders which are such a trial to the English pupil are more clearly marked by their spellings as 'masculine' and 'feminine' in Spanish than in French. There may also be arguments from the phonology of the two languages to suggest that distance from English into Spanish is shorter.

Are these good reasons for adopting a preferred order of language study and are there similar or stronger arguments to be made for Italian in the romance group? Can similar linguistic distance arguments (or pedagogically logical arguments) be advanced for German? or for Russian? Are there arguments that override such purely linguistic factors?

A quite different kind of argument might suggest that schools could choose as their apprenticeship language the one that offers most opportunity for fruitful school links, journeys and exchanges, eg in schools experimenting with *sections bilingues* arguments of supply of suitable teachers from abroad will be overriding.

Policy decisions by consortia of schools or by LEAs will almost certainly be based on more material considerations such as costs and staffing resources.

Once it is agreed, however, that the secondary school foreign language learning is an apprenticeship some important consequences seem to follow, regardless of the particular language chosen. These are:

(i) the experience of learning the language must be a true apprenticeship in how a foreign language is learnt.

(ii) the experience must be something to set the pupil free from the 'magical' view of language in which the monoglot is emprisoned.

(iii) the choice of teaching method and objectives will matter more than the choice of any particular language.

What can be said about choice of teaching method?

In any apprenticeship in learning foreign languages, it seems clear from recent research that an important place must be given to perception of speech patterns. On this depends the development of what J.W. Oller has called a 'grammar of expectancy'[3]. It seems to follow that our apprenticeship should give proper weight to helping our pupils to acquire a grammar of expectancy. If some pupils are slower than others at seeing patterns in the language they meet we should be seeking ways to help them. This must mean giving them the appropriate expectations for it seems we can only (or best) hear *what we expect to hear*. But learning via the ears poses special problems. Sounds are ephemeral whereas the eye can return repeatedly to the printed page. Children acquire bad habits, in self-defence in noisy environments, of switching off their hearing. Exclusively oral presentation of new language imposes impossible burdens on the ear unless wise preparations have been made by 'education of the ear' at the primary stage.

Another characteristic of the apprenticeship we are describing is that it should not be afraid to turn aside from practice in using the foreign language to consideration of the ways in which it contrasts with English and of its history and development where this will offer interesting comparisons with the mother tongue.

If the experience is to be a satisfying one ('lighting fires' in the words of the Crowther Report (Central Advisory Council for Education, 1959) which will burn after leaving school), it should offer the chance of early success and it ought to develop positive attitudes in the learner towards the foreign speech community.

For the experience to be satisfying does not mean that it need not at times be hard work. The experience of learning a language can be relished as a challenge. Children do opt in large numbers for quite severe challenges such as moorland treks, or hard matches in which knocks are taken. The important thing about language learning is that, especially in the initial stages, there shall be as Palmer warned (1968) no 'bewilderment' but clear satisfaction in progress made. Pupils must understand and accept the objectives set, the learning tasks must be meaningful and must appeal to the mind, not simply to the imitative capacity.

Organisation

An obvious need at secondary level which is only just beginning to be recognised, as the curriculum of the comprehensive school receives serious study, is the need for foreign language objectives to take account of differences in aptitude and pupils' interests. How are different aptitudes and interests to be catered for?

Most experienced teachers would probably say that after an initial diagnostic period, probably one year at the most, pupils should be grouped into reasonably homogeneous groups in order to enable each group to work towards an appropriate learning objective. At least three main groupings would be appropriate in most schools:

(i) One group would continue the language begun, with a developing exploration of the grammar and of the written language.

(ii) A second group might continue the language, concentrating on limited areas (eg one group on reading mastery or another group on listening comprehension).

(iii) A third group might change to a new language altogether, aiming at a restricted target with little emphasis on writing the language, and possibly motivated by short-term graded tests of performance.

If different learning objectives are to be set for different groups of pupils it will be important to avoid muddled thinking about so-called mixed ability teaching. There is no more reason to teach a foreign language year after year in groups of widely different aptitude than there would be to insist that gifted violinists, once identified, must practise side by side with the tone deaf or that the able games player should constantly be matched against a player who cannot give him a reasonable game. The curriculum of a school involves a wide variety of activities and many different kinds of teacher/pupil relationship. Mixed ability grouping may be appropriate to some subjects, for example, work in self-expression in the mother tongue or in the art room, or in craft and PE, even in mathematics where this concentrates on mainly private study using individual work cards. It is quite unsuitable for oral work in a language where the teacher must be the model for the pupils to imitate and where the work obliges the class to keep in lock-step for much of the time. This is a problem for dispassionate analysis rather than for the kind of emotive, muddled discussion it has too often had.

Testing

What are the implications for testing once we accept differentiated learning objectives? A great deal will depend on the kind of tests used to sanction progress. Tests should ideally follow the syllabus, not direct or limit it. Once prescribed, however, their backwash effect on classroom practice is notorious and constant reappraisal of the interaction of tester and teacher is called for. Tests must assess the experience as an apprenticeship in learning how to learn. One important dimension will be the attitudes and expectations set up during the experience. Simple tests of performance in the language will not themselves assess attitudes, motivation or the will to continue learning after school, or to visit the foreign country and talk to its people.

As well as attitudes to the language and to the foreign country, tests should reveal how far the experience has helped the pupil to grasp pattern in language, and to match accurately sound and written symbol. Other aspects of the apprenticeship

assessed by the tests might be how far the pupil can manipulate the main contrasting features between foreign language and mother tongue as well as internal contrasts within the foreign language which cause learning difficulties. The tests must distinguish between mistakes in the foreign language arising from serious misunderstanding of structure from constructive errors which are almost necessary steps on the pupil's road into the language.

Such tests are not yet available. If the need is accepted to define secondary school foreign language objectives in terms of apprenticeship leading to rapid language acquisition later, it will be important to develop new tests. It may be that lack of tests which pupils and teachers feel appropriate to rehearsal rather than performance explains much of the disillusionment expressed about language results at secondary level.

If pupils in roughly homogeneous groups have been set different learning objectives from the second or third years of the secondary course, it follows that the testing procedures must be appropriate to the objectives. This implies the setting of tests at sixteen-plus and eighteen-plus (and of course at intermediate stages if a graded system is introduced) of a profile type in which the pupil (carefully counselled) choses, from a menu of test items, a profile which best fits his or her course of study. The certificate awarded would show each pupil's performance in the particular areas tested. It would be, of course, for the user of the test (employer or university selector etc) to decide which elements in the profile were essential for his purposes.

Linguistic education in sixth forms and continuing education

The study of 'language'

Many pupils at sixth form level will have developed an interest in the subject language. It is important that there should be a language option in 'A' level or 'F' level. The inclusion of an optional element in the GCE 'A' level English paper for the linguist as opposed to the student of literature was in fact the last recommendation made by the Secondary Schools Examination Council before its demise in 1964. Such a development is long overdue.

The study of the mother tongue

In the comparatively enlightened era of the Higher School Certificate examinations (prior to 1950) it was the practice in many schools for pupils on the science side of sixth forms and those studying arts subjects such as economics, history, classics etc, to come together in mixed groups preparing for the subsidiary paper in English literature or a foreign language. It was often the only time that the two sides of the 'Snow Line' ever met. The subsidiary paper disappeared in 1950 and the universities' entrance requirements, expressed narrowly in terms of 'A' levels only, squeezed out the study of a language as an ancillary for non-specialists, whether mother tongue or foreign language. Possibly the 'N' and 'F' proposals now being debated will facilitate a return to the system that worked well before 1950. If so, and if the English papers give due encouragement (in a language option) to students to read

such stimulating introductory books as Jean Aitchison's *The articulate mammal*, Roger Brown's *Words and things* or E Sapir's classic *Language*, then the sixteen to nineteen year old's growing awareness of the role of language in life could greatly enrich the sixth form (or FE) experience.

Learning a foreign language

After the preparation for learning a foreign language at primary school, and the apprenticeship stage in secondary school the student's needs at the sixteen to nineteen stage and beyond can be summarily stated. This is the period when the student, having made his choice of the language he or she wishes to learn, reaches out for it determinedly. The approach is different from that of the younger pupil who merely finds a language on his timetable. The work is no longer language for its own sake. It is now motivated by the desire to get the meaning out of a particular book or article, or to explore a particular country. A more adult concentration is now under the control of the learner and he knows something of how to set about the task. This is the period therefore of intensive courses of different kinds, including reciprocal courses in which equal numbers of learners from two countries help each other to learn each other's language by intensive, alternating sessions in the two languages.

A wide choice of languages is called for, together with a good supply of material. This will almost certainly involve a sharing of resources between schools or colleges and a great variety of inter-school and combined activities, week-end simulation courses etc.

The multi-media systems approach, on which the Council of Europe group under John Trim has been working, points the way for the work at this stage, especially for those learners who are interested in languages for special purposes.

Testing at the sixteen to nineteen level

Modern language teachers will see in some versions of the 'N' and 'F' proposals a logical answer to the problem of the wholesale dropping of languages in the sixth form. Many pupils who have invested five years' hard work in an 'O' level, find in the present pattern of three 'A' levels no suitable target for the non-specialist linguist. The paramount need is for the restoration of some equivalent of the subsidiary paper for the non-specialist in the sixth form, which disappeared with the change from Higher School Certificate to GCE in 1950. It is not sufficiently widely known how much schools and pupils valued the subsidiary subject. For example, far more pupils used to take the JMB subsidiary in French than entered for the main papers (Schools Council *Working Paper 28*, 1970). The figures supplied by the JMB also show what an effect the subsidiary seems to have had in encouraging sixth formers who had passed in French at sixteen-plus to continue their French studies in the sixth form. The *proportion* of those passing School Certificate who later took a Higher Certificate exam increased year by year, only to fall catastrophically when the subsidiary target was taken away. Few examination changes can have had comparable adverse effects on what happens in schools. Those who see the present system as hallowed by tradition have short memories.

Specialist language studies

For specialists at sixth form level the need is to get a high degree of mastery of the language before reading difficult books or embarking on university studies. Many sixth form teachers have experimented successfully with the variations of the term, or six months, abroad for sixth formers. The need now is for negotiations within the EEC aimed at working out a flexible scheme for sixth form interchanges for periods of at least one term and in ways which do not simply further extend the privileges of the pupils whose parents can send them abroad for long periods. Schools Council Working Paper 28 pointed out the danger, already apparent in 1970, for modern language study to become a middle-class preserve. An urgent need is to reverse this trend.

Foreign languages and employers

Lastly a word must be said about the obligations of employers towards those pupils who leave school at sixteen plus. Nothing is more urgent than that employers should encourage young school leavers to keep up their interest in a foreign language. The complacency and parochialism of many employers (and trades unionists) regarding foreign language study is reflected in the attitudes brought into school by pupils whose parents, uncles, elder brothers are employed in industry and commerce. Nothing could do more to break down insularity than the inclusion in apprenticeship training courses and day release courses, for young employees on the shop floor and in offices, of an element of foreign language study. The reciprocal course referred to earlier in this paper lends itself admirably to the special needs of young apprentices. They could come together for intensive sessions with equally matched groups of apprentices from our EEC partners, and learn, once past the threshold level, the language of their own specialism, in the company of young colleagues of similar background and interests.

Notes

[1]White, J.P. *Towards a compulsory curriculum*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973. A counter example of a philosopher who would make a modern language a compulsory element in the curriculum is Raymond Williams. In *The long revolution*, Pelican Books, 1965 he lists five elements which should necessarily be included in a general education: (i) fundamentals of English and mathematics, (ii) knowledge of oneself and one's environment, (iii) study of history and criticism of literature, the visual arts, music, drama, landscape and architecture, (iv) the practice of democratic procedures and the study of sources of information, (v) an introduction to the study of at least one other culture, including the study of its language.

It may be worth recalling that the United Kingdom is committed, since 1969 as a member of the Council of Europe, and since 1975 as a member of the European Economic Community, to a decision in principle (1969 Resolution of the Council of Europe and 1975 Report of the EEC Council of Ministers) 'to aim to offer all pupils the chance to learn at least one other Community language'.

[2]Yuen Ren Chao. *Language and symbolic systems*. Cambridge University Press, 1968. Compare Vygotsky, L.S. *Thought and language*, MIT and John Wiley, 1962 — 'The

word to the child, is an integral characteristic of primitive linguistic consciousness'.

[3]English and Spanish match nicely in their use of the continuous form absent from French, ie the form 'is ing', 'was ing', ('esta ando', estaba ando'). Both in Spanish and English this form is limited to verbs of perfective meaning. In neither language can this form be used with imperfective verbs, like 'to know' (saber), denoting activities with no implication of completion, the reason being that the 'is ing' *forms* themselves carry an implication that the action described is finite. This fascinating aspect of Spanish and English usage, on the borderline between semantics and syntax, need not detain the beginning student of course but the similarity between the two languages must make for ease of comprehension. (Other examples of 'imperfective' verbs would be 'remember', 'understand', 'forgive', 'prefer' etc, none of which is normally used in the 'I am ing' form. Also 'see' and 'hear' but their use is more complex)

[4]Oller, J W. *Cloze tests of second language proficiency and what they measure*. Paper presented to AILA Congress, Copenhagen, 1972. Oller's researches into cloze testing have shown that it is the learner's developing ability *to guess what is coming*, from the linguistic evidence available, that makes rapid comprehension possible. Oller's grammar of expectancy also interacts with short term memory constraints. The more the learner can process the incoming language by matching it with remembered and recognised patterns, the more 'bits' of the message he can hold in his STM store. Oller's conclusions from cloze testing research are supported by evidence from aptitude testing. The 'Swedish grammar test' of aptitude devised by P S. Green of the Language Teaching Centre at York is described in his account of the York Three Year Study (Green, P S., ed. *The language laboratory in school performance and prediction*. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1975). This test predicted eleven-year-olds' aptitude for learning German better than any other measure of aptitude. It was in effect a measure of speed in perceiving quite simple, even superficial, patterns in written language and in creating new bits to fit the patterns. This theory is in turn supported by the work reported by G M. Olson in his paper 'Developmental changes in memory and the acquisition of language' in Moore, T E., editor, *Cognitive development and acquisition of language*. Academic Press, 1973. He shows the crucial role of the processing or patterning of incoming information in interaction with the constraints of short term memory.

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3. Priorities and patterns of provision

G.R. Potter

I am very conscious that I should not have been in a position to make this contribution if I had not had a special interest in the teaching of foreign languages. Yet, the last thing that is wanted is special pleading from an interested party. To guard against the danger I sent in draft the first five sections to some of my colleagues. Their views on it and on the topic are given on page 68.

Assessment of priorities

In 1978, any Chief Education Officer writing about priorities will inevitably be preoccupied with the allocation of resources, particularly teaching staff time. This current preoccupation with the shortage of resources and its influence on what happens in schools, has led, understandably, to the charge that the curriculum is being framed under economic rather than educational pressures. This is only partially true. Heads and teachers are still, quite rightly in my view, the major influence in shaping the curriculum. Responsive as they may be to such external influences as the expectations of parents and society at large, career needs and the availability of resources, Heads and staff continue to make important decisions about the curriculum by paying particular attention to what they regard properly as the major internal curriculum determinant, this is the pupils' need for a balanced educational diet that sustains personal and cultural development as well as meets the demands of future employment. This paper should be read, therefore, in the knowledge that the constraints and enthusiasms to be found in individual schools are usually far more influential than those existing at local authority and national levels.

I see a Chief Education Officer as having two primary functions: administratively, he is responsible for seeing that the education service in his area has the support that will enable schools and colleges to function in as near as possible optimum conditions; and professionally, he should ensure that they are exploiting these conditions to produce the most effective education possible for their pupils and students. To carry out these prime functions in relation to the teaching of modern languages, he must be assured that the allocation of resources to language teaching is likely to be educationally rewarding, cost effective and economically viable.

Three criteria for allocation of resources

Will the allocation be educationally rewarding?

To be educationally rewarding, foreign language teaching must contribute demonstrably to both the personal and vocational development of the recipients. The criteria involved in establishing this justification for language teaching, are set out clearly and fully in the early sections of Chapter 1 of this volume. In deciding whether or not these criteria are being met, the education officer must seek to hold a balance

between the professional judgement of teachers and the lay views of parents, public and elected members. We should be in no doubt that in so doing, we are not holding a balance between unrestrained enthusiasm from the professional camp and scarcely veiled hostility in the lay camp. Views in both camps range between these two extremities of opinion.

Our task is, therefore, firstly on the one hand to assess the comparative strengths of the professionally supported arguments that foreign language teaching receives already an undue proportion of teaching resources and curriculum time — arguments that draw their strength from the contention that modern languages make only a restricted contribution to meeting pupils' educational needs and the relatively low level of attainment achieved in them by most pupils. On the other hand, we need to evaluate the validity of the professional support for foreign language teaching as an important seminal element in a balanced curriculum for, at any rate, most pupils. This professional support seems more firmly based on the claim that it is this contribution to a balanced curriculum which justifies largely the time and attention given to modern languages, than on simply the importance of the acquisition of a specialist and largely isolated communication skill, which is hard won and readily lost by disuse. Both by background and interest, I am led to endorse wholeheartedly the arguments in favour of foreign language learning based on these broader educational justifications.

These justifications for foreign language teaching are often taken as understood by its protagonists and therefore left unstated. At the risk of either seeming to state the obvious, or of undermining the strength of my case for foreign language teaching by omitting them, I set out here briefly what I see as constituting the main broader justifications. First and foremost, I put their contributions to breaking down insularity, differences in languages even at an elementary level of language learning illuminate persuasively the naturalness of differences between peoples. Secondly, I put the development of a sensitivity to language. Third I rate the placing of greater emphasis on oral work which can be the more readily done in a foreign language where structured oral use of language is more acceptable because of the pupils' awareness of their own need for such support.

Will the allocation be cost effective?

These considerations do not, however, produce justification for the cost effectiveness of language teaching. To make this justification we must attempt to establish what is the contribution of foreign language learning to career opportunities for young people and to the economic prosperity of the country. Here we should be influenced not simply by what is the past and current situation, but also by what should be our aspirations for the future. In attempting to establish this contribution, we must also distinguish clearly between what are claimed to be the needs of industry and commerce at national level, and what we find to be the immediate needs recognised by local company staff who are responsible for most of the hiring and firing of staff. We should be doing no service to language teaching to claim that proficiency in a modern language is highly regarded and highly sought after by most companies at the level where most staff appointments are made. Despite our entry into the Common Market, there is still a widespread opinion that language skills are at best

of secondary importance, since English is normally a sufficient medium and where this is not so, those needed can be more cheaply and effectively engaged in the country to which the language is native. I am sure, therefore, that we need in this area much greater collaboration from industry and commerce in defining and isolating what are their language needs and even more importantly, we need to attempt to quantify the contribution that such skills could make to our national economy particularly by boosting exports.

Will the allocation be economically viable?

The economic viability of language teaching is concerned with whether organisationally we are deploying our resources economically, and is distinct from, although related to, whether we are getting good value for money which is the cost effectiveness which we have considered already. Since by far the largest item of expenditure in teaching a foreign language to any group is the cost of the teacher's salary, economic viability depends mainly upon the size of language learning groups. Neither French in the primary school, nor Russian in the sixth form, can be justifiably discontinued, therefore, on economic grounds provided that the size of the groups being taught are roughly comparable with those for other subjects, for then no saving is made when the language teaching is discontinued and the same amount of staff time used in teaching some other subject.

The legitimate economic concern about primary French arose largely not because it was not taught to full classes, but because additional peripatetic staff were often engaged to teach it since there was nobody on the staff sufficiently competent in French to teach it satisfactorily. Even this, however, need be no economic argument against the early study of language if the Authority's staffing provision allows for the engagement of part-time staff for remedial or small group work. Whilst the imported specialist is teaching French, the class teacher so released can be engaged on group work for which otherwise an additional part-timer would have been introduced.

It seems important here to add that the economic viability of making an early start on the learning of French is not in itself a valid justification for its inclusion in the primary curriculum. That justification has to be made on the importance of its contribution to this stage of children's education. A treatment of primary French in this context would more properly have fallen, therefore, in the section *Will the allocation be educationally rewarding?* I felt, however, that it would help to keep all the arguments concerning primary French together and I am, therefore, interpolating here a paragraph on the educational justification for this activity. I feel that in too many cases, when coming to a decision on whether or not to continue the teaching of French in primary schools, too little regard has been paid to advantages that accrue from an early start in the learning of a foreign language and too great weight attached to the final sentence of the report (Burstall, 1974) counselling that 'it is hard to resist the conclusion that the weight of the evidence has combined with the balance of opinion to tip the scales against a possible expansion of the teaching of French in primary schools'. Against this advice should be set the very substantial advantages referred to in Chapter 10 of the report.

By the age of sixteen, compared with those who are taught French from the

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> age of eleven, the only area in which the pupils taught French from the age of eight consistently show any superiority is that of listening comprehension. Even here, the differences between the various groups of pupils, although statistically significant, are hardly of a 'substantial' nature, being of the order of two to four points' difference on a 28-item test, a fairly minimal return for the extra years spent learning French in the primary school. Where the pupils taught French in the primary school do appear to gain is not in 'mastery' but in attitude. When they have been successful in their efforts to learn French, they do appear to retain a more favourable attitude towards speaking the language than do those who were not introduced to French until the age of eleven. However, this more positive attitude is not reflected in a correspondingly higher level of achievement.

It seems to me that schools and authorities should give very careful consideration to the advantages that accrue before, on educational grounds, deciding to discontinue the teaching of French in primary schools which, as I have demonstrated previously is frequently not necessarily as economically demanding in teacher time as has been suggested.

Less usual foreign languages at secondary level

The small sixth form group for third, fairly often even second, foreign languages, is a more intractable problem. I have little confidence in attempts to solve it by grouped classes serving a number of schools. Our experience is that time-tabling and travelling difficulties hamper such cooperation and that even when it is achieved, it is accompanied by such unwelcome side effects as reluctance to choose a subject which means separation from friendship groups, loss of interest by staff and of momentum for fourteen to sixteen year olds, extra expenditure on travelling, and loss of overall richness in language provision since many of the existing groups are taught largely outside a normal full timetable. The solution to the problems seems to be in an attitudinal change so that industry and commerce see a language skill as an important one for a wide range of employees and thus increase the incentive for many more students at sixteen plus to continue with learning a foreign language. We could do much on the educational side to promote this development by devising, and winning acceptance for, graded tests in the four macro-skills of speaking, understanding, writing and reading. The availability of sixteen-plus courses geared towards a student's specific language need or needs, should help to increase the overall numbers taking a second or third foreign language and thus reduce the number of small groups.

Initiatives and executive actions

Whilst the role of the Chief Education Officer is primarily an enabling one, he should also be ready and keen to take initiatives in promoting those aspects of education which he feels are in the best interests of pupils, students and the community at large. He must be careful, however, that in so doing, he does not seem to be pre-empting the allocation of resources to feed his hobby-horse at the expense of the funds which can be made available to foster the curriculum developments seen as

most important by teachers and lecturers in schools and colleges. The role of the Chief Education Officer in promoting the proper development of language teaching must be, therefore, to ensure that all the arguments are fully available and duly considered by heads of establishments in determining their language teaching pattern. He should see also that local authority committees do not take sudden and irrational decisions at the authority level which would handicap schools in developing the teaching of modern languages. The temptation to take decisions of this kind has been heightened over the last three years by the severe economic constraints within which local education authorities have had to operate. When authorities are being pressed to take actions which they recognise as being educationally undesirable, but economically unavoidable, then it is more difficult to balance judiciously the relative values of the various component parts in the education system. Yet obviously never has it been more important that decisions about priorities should be taken on a firm and rational basis.

The early teaching of French is one area in which recent hasty and ill-considered decisions may have been taken and this has been covered already. Another, is the termination of schemes for employing foreign assistants. It is easy to justify this decision in the light of current economic difficulties but one wonders to what extent the decision has been taken after a careful weighing of the immediate financial gain against the long term potential loss. The loss from ceasing to engage foreign assistants lies particularly in the impact that this may have on the provision of opportunities abroad for our own students of foreign languages, whose visits abroad depend upon reciprocal arrangements.

Organisational factors

The teaching of modern languages has been significantly affected by the reorganisation of the structure of education from the ages of eight to eighteen.

Middle and intermediate schools

The introduction of middle or intermediate schools for pupils between the ages of eight to twelve or nine to thirteen has facilitated an effective earlier start with the teaching of a first foreign language. These schools can undertake such a start at the age of eight or nine much more readily than most primary schools, since they are generally larger and have in many cases introduced a degree of subject specialisations on at least a consultative basis.

The reorganisation of secondary education

This reorganisation has altered fundamentally the circumstances under which modern languages are taught at secondary level. This change has sprung from two major new factors which have accompanied such reorganisation.

The first of these is that we are now attempting to teach a foreign language in the early stages of secondary education to the vast majority of our pupils. Under the former selective system we restricted such teaching to probably little more than one-third of the pupil population since relatively little modern language teaching went on outside the selective schools which accommodated about 25 per cent of each age group.

Secondly, the disappearance of selective schools has meant that we no longer have a concentration in them of abler pupils who can readily learn a second foreign language or who can make rapid progress by analogical methods in a first foreign language.

Patterns of language teaching and distribution of teaching staff in two local education authorities

The earlier sections of this paper have dealt with general trends and opinions. I felt it might be helpful to accompany these with detailed information about the pattern of language teaching and the distribution and availability of staff in the areas of two fairly well contrasted local authorities. I set out, therefore, to present a comparative picture of the language teaching scene in the City of Birmingham and in the county of West Sussex.

In the following sections the analyses of the two authorities differ in both content and presentation since they have not resulted from the use of identical questionnaires, but in part from information specially gathered for this survey and in part from information already collected by the authorities. It is regretted that this makes direct comparisons more difficult, but, since the basic pattern of school organisation is so different in the two authorities, I had to accept from the outset that even with an identical questionnaire, the resulting pictures would not in many respects be readily and meaningfully comparable.

For the Birmingham survey, I am indebted directly to John Crawford, the Chief Education Officer, and his General Inspector for Schools, specialising in Modern Languages, John Robinson and for that in West Sussex to Eric Garner our Languages Adviser; indirectly, my debt is also to the Heads of schools and their staffs who helped us complete our surveys.

City of Birmingham, April 1978

Pattern of schools and modern language courses

Types of school

There are 110 secondary schools divided as follows:

75 mixed comprehensive — Starting age 11
11 girls' comprehensive — Each of these is so organised
9 boys' comprehensive — as to permit post-16 provision

6 mixed comprehensive 12–18
1 girls' comprehensive 12–18
1 sixth form college
4 boys' aided grammar 11–18
2 girls' aided grammar 11–18
1 boys' aided grammar 12–18

Total 110

Distribution of languages

This survey relates to the four principal modern languages taught to public examination level: French, German, Spanish, Russian. It does not include Italian, Latin, Greek, Asian tongues or European Studies.

French

French is taught in 109 schools – in 102 it is first language
– in 4 it is equal-first language
– in 41 it is sole language

German

German is taught in 53 schools – in 3 it is first language
– in 2 it is equal-first language
– in 1 it is sole language

Note From September 1978 two more schools will introduce German as a second language.
French will be introduced into the one school in which German is currently the sole language.

Spanish

Spanish is taught in 28 schools – in 1 it is first (and sole) language
– in 2 it is equal first language

Russian

Russian is taught in 5 schools – in 1 it is equal first language

Examination courses (based on Summer 1977 entries)

French

'A' level	in 52 schools
'O' level	in 52 schools
CSE	in 90 schools

First CSE entries in 1978: 14

German

'A' level	in 27 schools
'O' level	in 39 schools
CSE	in 23 schools

At pre-CSE or pre-'O' level stage in 10 schools.

Spanish

'A' level	in 12 schools
'O' level	in 17 schools
CSE	in 15 schools

At pre-CSE or 'O' level in 6 schools.

Analysis of teaching staff

Composition of teaching staff involved in modern language work

East area			
Full-time mainly/wholly FL	108	(41M	67F)
Part-time wholly/mainly FL	4	(–	4F)
Full-time partly FL	6	(2M	4F)
Instructress	1	(–	1F)
Total	119	43 Male	76 Female
South area			
Full-time mainly/wholly FL	107	(77F	30M)
Part-time wholly/mainly FL	8	(8F	–)
Full-time partly FL	5	(4F	1M)
Total	120	89 Female	31 Male
West area			
Full-time mainly/wholly FL	92	(57F	35M)
Part-time wholly/mainly FL	8	(8F	–)
Full-time partly FL	10	(5F	5M)
Total	110	70 Female	40 Male
Consortium languages team (Scale 4 appointments)	13	(5F	8M)
Secondary mobile supply staff (Scale 3)	2	(–	2M)
Total	307 Full-time 21 Part-time (=approx 10 Full-time) 20 Full-time partly FL – (=approx 7 Full-time)		

Equivalent to a full-time teaching staff of 339. This total of 339 does not include staffing for the 6 11–18 aided grammar schools or for the sixth form college

Responsibility allowances
East Area
Senior Teacher–2. Scale 4–13. Scale 3–18. Scale 2–28

South Area
Scale 4–12. Scale 3–26. Scale 2–34

West Area
Scale 4–12. Scale 3–24. Scale 2–28

Notional staffing on a city-wide basis
Introduction
The situation for language teaching in the city is still fluid because of the developing nature of courses in certain former secondary modern schools, the changing emphases on courses in former selective schools, the effect of falling rolls, the development of a consortium system, the provision of consortium staff, extra-establishment. As a rough guide to what staffing would be needed if all courses were fully developed the figures set out below have been arrived at.

Coverage in years 1–3 in all comprehensive schools (103)
Assuming 4 periods per week and that form entry equals number of teaching groups a complete coverage for years 1–3 requires — 6764 periods

but if one remedial class per school extracted in year 3 — 6252 periods

Additional periods for second foreign language years 1–3
Assuming 25 per cent of original 12+ intake of 533 classes begin in year 2 for 4 periods a week and that in Sutton a 2nd FL is taught on entry from middle school at 12+ — 1166 periods

but if a 2nd FL is initiated at third year only — 583 periods

Combined totals of periods required
If FL1 full coverage in years 1–3 with FL2 to 25 per cent years 2–3 — 7930 periods

If FL1 full coverage in years 1–3 with FL2 to 25 per cent year 3 only — 7347 periods

If FL1 full coverage in years 1–2 with extraction in year 3 plus FL2 to 25 per cent in years 2–3 — 7418 periods

If as above but FL2 in year 2 only — 6835 periods

Coverage in years 4–5 in all comprehensive schools
Assuming FL1 now taught to one-third of original 2nd year intake of 583 classes with 5 periods in years 4 and 5 — 1950 periods

Assuming FL2 wastage of 10 per cent on original period allocation = 583 — 10 per cent in years 4 and 5	1050 periods
To be added to total periods for coverage of years 1–3	3000 periods

Aided grammar schools
Additional needs of 6 aided grammar schools
Assuming FL1 taught to 75 per cent of original intake for 5 periods and no wastage for FL2 + 200

= 3200

Implications for staffing years 1–5 in all schools
Adding 3200 to each of the possible combined totals yields a period range of from 10930 to 10035 in teacher terms between –

342 – 314 full-time linguists

Coverage for sixth form teaching
It is difficult to estimate future needs with any accuracy until languages have been put on a firmer footing in years 1–5 in many schools. Assuming the 91 courses offered in 1977 is a maximum and that the L6 and U6 allocation of time is 7 periods in each which with some combining requires a total provision of 10 periods per course then another 29 full-time teachers would be required.

Summary
Notional city staffing requirement between 371 –343 full-time languages teachers.
There is thus a shortfall of up to 32 teachers.

Foreign language assistants
Although these cannot be included in staffing totals, assistants perform a valuable ancillary service. For the year 1976–77 the total was 27.

County of West Sussex, January 1978

Pattern of schools and modern language courses

Extent of survey

This survey is based on returns from all 45 secondary schools and was taken in March, 1978. The information given relates to the situation obtaining at 1st January, 1978.

The survey refers to the 4 languages taught to public examination level in West Sussex secondary schools – French, German, Spanish and Russian. It does not include Latin, Greek or European Studies. A distinction is made between full-time (FT) staff employed wholly or mainly (ie more than 50 per cent of timetable) on Modern

Language (ML) work, full-time staff employed partly (ie less than 50 per cent of timetable) on ML work and part-time staff (PT). Except where otherwise stated, foreign language assistants are not included.

Types of school

There are 45 secondary schools (including five 9–13 intermediate schools) distributed geographically and divided into the categories shown below.

Western area	12 schools (2 intermediate 9–13, 3 11–16, 6 11–18, 1 13–18)
Mid-Sussex area	11 schools (7 11–16, 2 11–18, 2 16–18 – sixth form college)
North-eastern area	9 schools (2 intermediate 9–13, 4 11–18, 2 12–18, 1 13–18)
Southern area	13 schools (1 intermediate 9–13, 3 11–16, 4 12–16, 2 11–18, 2 12–18, 1 16–18 – sixth form college)
Total	45

Distribution of languages

The survey relates to the four principal modern languages taught to public examination level.

French

French is taught in 45 schools – in 44 it is first language
– in 1 it is equal first language
– in 6 it is sole language

German

German is taught in 39 schools – in 1 it is equal first language
– in 20 it is sole second language to French
– in 18 it is joint second language

Note From September 1979 all secondary schools should be offering both French and German with the exception of 9–13 intermediate schools offering French only.

Spanish

Spanish is taught in 18 schools – In every case it is offered as joint second language with German or as third language after French and German.
– In 3 schools it is offered at 16+.

Russian

Russian is taught in 3 schools – in 2 it is offered only at 16+
– in the remaining school the existing 'O' level pre-16+ course is phasing out and Russian will eventually be offered only at sixth form level.

Examination courses (based on Summer 1977 entries)

French
'A' level in 24 schools
'O' level in 37 schools
CSE in 33 schools

Note Examination courses are now established at pre-CSE and/or pre-'O' level stage in 40 secondary schools (ie excluding the 5 intermediate schools)

German
'A' level in 17 schools
'O' level in 31 schools
CSE in 18 schools

Spanish
'A' level in 10 schools
'O' level in 16 schools
CSE in 5 schools

Note Individual entries for 'O' level Spanish appeared in 4 other schools where no course was provided ie candidates were entered from 20 schools in all

Russian
'A' level in 1 school
'O' level in 3 schools

Analysis of teaching staff
Composition of teaching staff involved in modern language work

Qualified modern language staff

	Western	Mid-Sussex	North-eastern	Southern	All areas
(i) Full-time mainly/wholly ML	47 (44)	52 (51 5)	46 (45 8)	69 (53)	204 (194 3)
Breakdown by sex	22M 25F	21M 31F	14M 32F	22M 37F	79M 125F
(ii) Full-time partly ML	12 (3 5)	16 (5 5)	5 (1 4)	14 (4)	47 (14 4)
Breakdown by sex	6M 6F	9M 7F	–M 5F	8M 6F	23M 24F

(iii) Part-time ML involvement	7 (3)	9 (4 5)	5 (1 8)	4 (1 5)	25 (10 8)
Breakdown by sex	1M 6F	4M 5F	4M 1F	2M 2F	11M 14F
Total staff involved	66 (50 5)	77 (61 5)	56 (49 0)	77 (58 5)	276 (219 5)
By sex	29M 37F	30M 47F	14M 42F	32M 45F	105M 171F

Note The figure in brackets is equivalent full-time, modern languages only

Foreign language assistants
Western 3, Mid-Sussex 4, North-eastern 3, Southern 3 Total 13 Each assistant now counts as 0 1 against the school's teaching establishment and as a result, the number employed has declined from 55 in 1975/76

Qualified modern language staff not teaching languages
2 (1 remedial/1 integrated studies) plus Heads

Vacancies
6 modern language posts were vacant or covered by temporary appointments at 1st January, 1978

Comment on the analysis
Of the 276 teachers involved with modern languages, 204 (ie 74 per cent) were full-time specialists, engaged wholly or mainly in this area of the curriculum, 47 (ie 17 per cent) were full-time staff (specialist or semi-specialist) engaged in language teaching for less than half of their timetable and 25 (ie 9 per cent) were part-time staff In terms of teaching time/proportion of modern languages work 'covered', however, the 'equivalent full-time' figures show that the 204 full-time specialists mainly or wholly engaged in modern language work (equivalent to 194 3 full-time staff devoted exclusively to modern language teaching) accounted for 88 per cent of overall staff involvement in modern languages, the remaining 12 per cent being covered by full-time staff mainly engaged elsewhere (7 per cent) and part-time staff (5 per cent). Sex distribution varies from area to area, the higher proportion of women modern language staff being especially marked in the North-east (characterised by large 'all through' comprehensive schools) Part-time staff are of course predominantly female, but of the 251 full-time teachers involved in modern language work, approximately 60 per cent are women. The trend is increasing, however, with many more women candidates than men applying for modern language posts at Scales 1 and 2. Several Heads commented that the better qualified applicants for first appointments in languages are usually women and the high proportion of female to male students in sixth form language classes can only confirm the tendency

On average, each secondary school employs some 5 modern language teachers, but this number naturally varies with the size of school, ranging from 2 to 13 The ratio of modern language staff to total pupil numbers also varies considerably, in part

according to the type of school, from 1:96 (sixth form college) to 1:335 (former secondary modern, now comprehensive). In general, ratios were high in 11 to 16 and 12 to 16 schools, with 1:300 not uncommon.

Patterns of teaching by modern language teachers

Number of teachers teaching each language

	Western	Mid-Sussex	North-eastern	Southern	All areas
French only	38	45	37	43	163
German only	3	9	3	3	18
Spanish only	2	–	–	2	4
French/German	14	8	5	12	39
German/French	2	4	7	6	19
French/Spanish	1	7	2	4	14
Spanish/French	3	2	2	2	9
Others (inc. Russian)	3	2	–	5	10
(Language combinations as shown)	(F/R–1 R/F/G–1 F/E–1)	(R/Classics–1 R/I etc–1)		(F/R–1 G/R–1 F/Lat–1 F/G/S–1 S/G/F–1)	
Totals	66	77	56	77	276

Note: Where one or more languages are taught, that shown first represents the 'main' language which is taken as that to which most time is given.

Number of modern language staff teaching a language other than that in which they are mainly qualified, for all or most of their time

Western	3	2 Russian Hons = French/German 1 German Hons = French/German
Mid-Sussex	3	1 Spanish Hons = French 1 German Hons = French 1 Classics – Russian/Classics
North-eastern	4	1 Russian/German = German/French 3 German Hons = French (1 int/2 sec)
Southern	3	3 Spanish Hons = French or French/German
Total	13	

Comment on the analysis

The predominant 'pull' of French reflects the current situation of the three main languages taught in West Sussex schools. Of the 276 teachers engaged (to any extent) in language teaching, 221 (80 per cent) are spending most of their time on French. The number of staff teaching only German (well established in the County as FL2) is surprisingly low, and includes some part-time teachers. A significant number of teachers qualified in the 'minority languages' (Spanish, Russian, Italian) are unable to make full use of their qualifications in present circumstances. It would seem that there will be even less place in future for the single language specialist than exists at present, and that even more versatility will be called for from the teaching force in this respect.

Analysis of modern language staff by qualification, training and experience

Qualifications

Qualification(s) held	Western	Mid-Sussex	North-Eastern	Southern	All areas
ML Hons degree + PGCE	27	35	23	32	117
ML Hons (pre-1973) only	7	11	9	9	36
ML Ord/Gen degree + PGCE	6	–	2	5	13
ML Ord/Gen (pre-1973) only	3	1	1	–	5
BEd degree (with ML)	4	2	2	5	13
Qual Grad (non-ML)	3	4	–	4	11
Foreign national + PGCE	–	4	5	1	10
Foreign national (Grad equiv pre-1973)	2	1	5	1	9
Cert Ed (inc ML)	6	10	4	14	34
Cert Ed (non-ML)	6	5	3	–	14
Other/no formal quals (inc Foreign national Instructor)	2	2	–	3	7
Totals	66	75	54	74	269

Note In a few cases the basic qualifications of staff only marginally involved in modern language teaching were not given by schools.

Modern language staff who had not completed their probationary period at 1st January, 1978

Western	Mid Sussex	North-east	Southern	All areas
3	5	2	7	17

Age of modern language staff

Age range	Western	Mid Sussex	North-eastern	Southern	All areas
21–30	22	22	13	34	91
31–40	22	19	23	15	79
41–50	14	21	14	14	63
51–60	8	12	5	11	36
60+	–	3	1	3	7
Totals	66	77	56	77	276

Comment on the analysis

The most usual qualification held by modern language teachers in our secondary schools is an honours degree in modern languages, normally with a PGCE. Of the 269 staff listed, 166 (62 per cent) hold an honours degree or BEd with languages, while a further 18 hold an ordinary or general degree with a languages component and 19 more are graduate foreign nationals. The largest remaining group, one of 34 (12½ per cent) have a certificate of education qualification with a main modern language. Of the remainder, the great majority of those without specific modern language qualifications, 32 in all, (12 per cent) fall into the categories of part-time staff or of full-time staff mainly employed on other duties.

Despite fluctuations in some areas, the overall 'age profile' of the modern language teaching force is a pyramid, with a majority of teachers in the younger age ranges at the 'base', and progressively fewer represented at each ten year 'step' as shown in the following table:

Age range	Number of teachers	Percentage
21 – 30	91	33
31 – 40	79	23
41 – 50	63	23
Over 50	43	16
Totals	276	100

At a time of greater stability than we have known for some time, and with no significant expansion of the teacher force envisaged for the future, the implications of this pattern for career structures merit further study so that they may be taken fully into account in any attempt at future projections of staffing needs and resources.

Responsibility Allowances

Distribution

Scale of post held	Western	Mid-Sussex	North-eastern	Southern	All areas	Percentage
Scale 4 Head of dept	6	8	6	8	28	13 7
Scale 3 Head of dept	3)	3)	1)	4)	11)	14 2
Other	6) 9	5) 8	5) 6	2) 6	18) 29	
Scale 2 Head of dept	2)	-)	1)	1)	4)	29 0
Other	10) 12	14) 14	8) 9	23) 24	55) 59	
Totals	27	30	21	38	116	56 9
Scale 1	20	22	25	21	88	43 1
Total of all posts	47	52	46	59	204	100 0

Note The number of Head of department allowances shown does not tally exactly with number of secondary schools, since in one or two cases a Senior teacher allowance (eg Deputy head/Head of sixth form) also carries responsibility for the modern languages department. Many Scale 2 and Scale 3 posts (non-Head of department) carry eg pastoral responsibility as well as responsibility for modern languages.

Comment on the analysis

Of the 204 full-time staff engaged wholly or mainly on modern language teaching, 116 (56 9 per cent) are in receipt of a responsibility allowance, in many cases involving a 'pastoral' element. In the eyes of most Heads who responded to the survey, however, the proportion of above-scale allowances available was much less important than the question of overall staffing ratios, which were having a particularly significant effect on 11 or 12–16 schools still undergoing reorganisation. In cases where 'falling rolls' are likely to obtain for the future in these schools, curricular options will have to be reduced if ratios remain at their present level or worsen, and many Heads of such schools feared that the result could be a reduction to a single modern language being offered.

Resignation and recruitment

Predicted loss of modern languages staff through 'natural wastage' by September, 1980

Western	Mid Sussex	North-eastern	Southern	Total
4	9	7	9	29

Recruitment

Heads were asked to state the degree of difficulty encountered in making various categories of modern language appointments since September, 1976, on the following 4 point scale: no difficulty; some difficulty (eg small field); very difficult (eg re-advertisement); unable to appoint. Responses were as follows:

Category of post	No difficulty	Some difficulty	Very difficult	Unable to appoint
Head of department	1	4	2	1
Other Scale 2/3	2	4	4	1
Scale 1 posts	4	18	2	1 (Sp)
Totals	7	26	8	3

Comment on the analysis

The total of 44 modern language appointments represented above averages 1 per secondary school over the period indicated. Not all Heads had direct experience of the recruitment situation in modern languages recently, but the majority of those who had were agreed that modern languages represented one of the more difficult subject areas in this respect, especially for more senior posts. (The position has eased somewhat for Scale 1 appointments.) One Head commented that figures above could not reflect the frustration of eg a 2 year period before a satisfactory appointment could be made to a Scale 2 post. Certain modern language combinations (eg French/Spanish) were particularly difficult and there were problems in staffing FL2 adequately in smaller schools, especially where no sixth form work was available. One or two schools depended on part-time staff to maintain German. Recruitment was rendered more frustrating by the erratic publication record of the *TES* and the policy of inserting an advertisement on a single occasion only, with the result that key vacancies were sometimes not advertised at all or advertised too late for an appointment to be made.

General comments

Heads were given the opportunity to comment on aspects of modern language staffing, etc, which seemed significant to them. Apart from the frequently reiterated worries about the effect of staffing ratios in 11 or 12–16 schools on future modern language provision (set out above) the following points were made.

The reduction in the number of foreign language assistants employed as a result of their allocation being 'tied' to staffing points was very much regretted. Since this formula deprived most schools (and especially 11 or 12–16 schools, where modern language departments are under most pressure from adverse staffing ratios) of a very useful adjunct.

Size of modern language groups was too great for effective work in many cases (eg third year secondary 30+). The need for shorter lessons for modern languages than for most other subjects also led to difficulties, particularly in split-site schools.

Dangers for 2nd and 3rd foreign languages were seen both in overall staffing constraints and the continued recruitment of single-language specialists and (for the future) in the decline in 'A' level FL2 groups. Even now, some schools were unable to staff fully for languages and it was pointed out that recruitment to a declining subject area in a 'falling roll' situation resulted in an equation which never worked out economically.

Recruitment of well-qualified modern language staff (in a 'shortage subject' area) would continue to be difficult, especially in 11 or 12–16 schools but also in 11–18 schools where the bulk of language teaching was concentrated at the lower end. The need for a high level of linguistic proficiency and considerable methodological expertise in modern language teachers was reiterated.

The multiple (and exhausting) demands on modern language staff were stressed — including CSE commitments, oral examining, foreign visits and exchanges, liaison with both 'feeder' and receiving schools, etc.

The need for more purely linguistic sixth form courses was mentioned. One Head of department respondent queried the present emphasis on communication and the inculcation of active skills as principal aims in language teaching.

One Head suggested making greater use of the 'pool' of graduate foreign nationals, by easier recognition (perhaps after 'crash' courses in methodology). This solution would be resisted by DES. Another suggested the recruitment of a body of advisory teachers on permanent supply for modern language work as needed.

Conclusion

It is clear that staffing, whether in terms of ratios applied or of the overall size and quality of the national 'pool', holds the key to future progress. To ensure the continued well being of modern languages (and other key areas of the secondary curriculum), it may become necessary to adopt a radical measure such as the determination of minimum levels of provision for different types of school and their translation into a basic modern languages staffing establishment for each school, modified as necessary to take account of individual circumstances. If some such solution could be devised, the information contained in this survey (and in the survey of modern language provision in the West Sussex secondary sector taken at the beginning of this school year) should provide the data required to establish realistic 'base lines'.

Comments and suggestions from other local education authorities

I am most grateful for the comments and suggestions made on the first draft of this paper by colleagues in other local education authorities; substantial improvements have resulted from their help. The opinions expressed in the rest of the paper remain, of course, my own and I have not attempted, therefore, to attribute changes to the colleagues who influenced me, nor does it seem practicable in this section, to make detailed attribution since much of what is said in it is the amalgamation of views from several of the contributors. I wish, therefore, to express very warm thanks to my colleagues in Birmingham, Hillingdon, Kirklees, Lancashire, Leicestershire, North Yorkshire and Somerset. I am summarising in the five subsections that follow what seem to me the main trends in the comments received.

Justification for the teaching of modern languages

There is warm support for this to be based on the broader educational contribution of language studies to a balanced curriculum. Their value later in employment is an additional not central argument for their importance in the curriculum. Great stress was placed on the growing importance of competence in a foreign language for a wider cross section of the community as mobility of labour increases. The need to communicate in a foreign language is extending to the growing number of craftsmen and technicians whose work takes them into Europe. To this additional vocational need should be added that of the increased number of young people and adults whose leisure interests take them abroad. In no other field is the learning of foreign languages booming to the same extent as in adult education. It is regrettable that this later study has, all too often, to be built upon totally inadequate earlier preparation at secondary school stage.

The role of the local education authority

This role is seen as having these main features: co-ordination of activities between schools, allocation of resources, and improvement in the quality of language teaching through both in-service training and general advisory work. Several colleagues pointed out that whilst it is valuable for the curriculum to be responsive to the needs of individual pupils, as it can be that under the control of the Headmaster, it is in fact this autonomy of individual schools which accounts for a good deal of the difficulty in co-ordinating language teaching, and I have therefore devoted a sub-section of this part of the report to the topic of co-ordination.

The importance of a competent and adequate advisory service was emphasised by all contributors. My reservation about language advisers undertaking also other advisory duties, was not generally shared, since it was felt that this extended role helped to place language teaching in correct perspective in the whole curriculum. I accept the validity of this contention, but still feel that language advisers who are appointed primarily for their specialist skill, are best equipped to help schools in the specific subject area. I feel general advice is best given by phase advisers who have been recruited with that role specifically in mind.

Curriculum co-ordination between schools

Everyone emphasised the need for this co-ordination if we are to obtain the full benefit from language teaching as a cumulative activity and if we are to maintain the teaching of second and third foreign languages. These two aims pre-suppose co-ordination at two levels: the first aim requires co-ordination between schools in different phases of education where a modern language, normally French, is started in a primary or middle school and then continued into secondary and perhaps tertiary education; the second aim concerns the difficulty of recruiting sufficiently large groups of students in many comprehensive schools to justify the inclusion of a second or third foreign language in the curriculum.

Difficulties in co-ordination, as well as in the supply of well-qualified teachers, gave rise to reservations about the wisdom of continuing French in primary schools in the minds of some contributors. It was felt whilst skilled language teachers were in short supply they should be concentrated in the secondary sector where there is still room for great improvement in what we are achieving. It was felt too that in order to maintain second and third foreign languages at secondary level, authorities ought to be prepared to contemplate more generous staffing provision.

Experience elsewhere with consortia of schools offering less usual languages by cooperation has been more successful than in West Sussex and is an approach which must be pursued. Despite the inherent difficulties, the development of institutions with a specialism in language teaching is envisaged as a means of solving the problem of small groups for second and third foreign languages, particularly at post-fifth year level.

School organisation

It was pointed out that the introduction of middle schools may not everywhere improve the opportunities for language teaching. It can lead to a foreign language being started at a later age than eleven; if language teaching is still deferred until the secondary stage, it may also result in an early dropping of foreign language study if schools feel that after a start at eight or nine, pupils have reached their ceiling of attainment by the age of twelve or thirteen.

Attention was drawn also to the effects on modern language teaching and the pressures of the options system at the third and fourth year level. These are leading to attempts to teach languages with inadequate allocations of time, amounting in some instances to only two or three periods per week. It was felt that this situation was aggravated by organisational problems in smaller comprehensive schools where it was difficult to provide sufficient sets of pupils and sufficient staff to include a second or third foreign language in the timetable.

Objective and attitudes

There was universal support for the argument that our greatest needs in stimulating more and better language teaching are: firstly, the definition of varied and appropriate objectives in language learning to suit the abilities and aspirations of pupils; and secondly, a change in attitude by society at large and industry and commerce in

particular to the importance of language learning skills both as part of a balanced education and as an essential communication skill in an age of rapidly expanding international activity.

Reference

Burstall, C. and others. *Primary French in the balance*. NFER, 1974.

4. The education of teachers of foreign languages

R.J. Godfrey and
E.W. Hawkins

Present trends in teacher supply

Within the past ten to fifteen years trends in the teaching and learning of foreign languages have led to cause for concern in teacher supply. The first, well summarised in the introduction to *Modern languages in comprehensive schools* (HMSO, 1977), has been the expansion of language teaching to children of a far broader spread of ability. Whereas in the early 1960s some 20 per cent of children in secondary schools embarked upon a course in a foreign language, probably between 80 per cent and 95 per cent of such children now learn a foreign language for at least one, and often for a minimum of two or three years. This policy, by creating a greatly increased demand, has led to a shortage of French teachers, with the inevitable dilution of quality that that implies. The vertical expansion of language teaching, to include substantial numbers of pupils in primary and middle schools has created yet a further demand for teachers.

At the same time, numbers of potential teachers of all the major foreign languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian), have either shown a marked decline or, at best, remained static. The following table illustrates one factor contributing to this trend.

Passes at GCE 'A' level 1970–75

Language	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	% change 1970–75
French							
Boys	6,419	6,184	5,081	5,630	5,499	5,429	−15.4
Girls	11,630	11,915	11,592	11,424	11,636	11,490	− 1.2
Total	18,049	18,099	17,393	17,054	17,135	16,919	− 6.3
German							
Boys	2,226	2,196	2,111	1,987	2,156	2,091	− 6.1
Girls	3,418	3,574	3,555	3,503	3,585	4,154	21.0
Total	5,644	5,770	5,666	5,590	5,741	6,225	10.3
Spanish							
Total	1,997	2,019	1,936	1,901	1,881	2,014	0.85
Italian							
Total	720	707	712	693	640	619	−14.0

Russian							
Total	619	705	655	570	549	508	-21.9

(Sources: *Statistics of Education* and CILT papers)

Among the disturbing facts to emerge from this table are:

(i) that with the exception of girls offering German, (numbers up by a quarter), and boys and girls offering Spanish, (numbers stable), passes in foreign languages have declined during a period (1970–75) when the overall number of passes in all subjects has increased by 12.5 per cent.

(ii) that the imbalance between boys and girls taking modern languages at eighteen-plus is increasing at an alarming rate, the boys showing a drop of 2,000 in French and 500 in German in the last ten years.

In higher education, the following table shows degrees awarded in the various languages between 1970 and 1975.

Total degrees obtained 1970–75

Language	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	% change
French	957	1035	972	912	964	927	-3.1
German	484	492	421	486	472	500	+3.3
Spanish	200	217	197	212	216	171	-14.5
Italian*	151		154		204		–
Russian	175	188	159	185	168	160	-8.6

* Figures incomplete. Officially published statistics for Italian are normally included in 'Other and combined West European languages'. Figures shown are those published by the AT1 for 1974, supplemented by the *CRAC Degree Course Guide* (1975/76).

(Sources: *Statistics of Education* and CILT papers.)

Clearly these figures do not present a complete picture. In addition to the combined degrees in French and German language studies (314 Degrees in 1975) they ignore students taking courses leading to CNAA degrees. In 1974–5, the numbers of students enrolled on CNAA courses including a main or subsidiary component in each of the languages were: French 2,685, German 1,325, Spanish 954, Italian 249, Russian 409. It is not easy to compare these figures with those shown above as the nature and importance of the language components to which they refer vary widely.

In considering these facts, it is worthy of note that degrees obtained in 1975 were awarded to students who took GCE 'A' level in 1972 at the latest, and probably earlier. The decline in 'A' level passes since then will not yet have made its full impact on higher education.

While, for a variety of reasons, it is not necessarily true that the number of suitable applicants for courses is directly proportional to the number of those qualifying each year, nevertheless a consistently downward trend at eighteen-plus soon leads to a scarcity of candidates for initial training. There is evidence of such a scarcity, and the situation has been exacerbated by the recent severe cutbacks in the number of initial training places available, particularly at undergraduate (BEd) and non-degree (three-year Certificate in Education) levels.

From a survey conducted in 1976 by B.G. Palmer on behalf of the Modern Languages Section of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, the following points emerge:

(i) University departments of education

> 'Judging by the output figures of the UDEs over the past three years and their forecast for next year (ie the 1977 intake of students) (*c.* 700 for 'specialists' in all languages in 23 UDEs against 775 in 25 UDEs quoted in the Spicer/Riddy report) the situation in UDEs appears so far to have been stable. The imbalance in numbers towards women was frequently said to be increasing.'

(ii) The (former) colleges of education offering languages

> 'Of the 91 colleges offering French in 1970, 22 are to close and, as a result of mergers, the total number of institutions has been reduced to 58 potentially able to go on training teachers of French; of the fourteen colleges formerly offering German three have closed and the number reduced by a merger to ten; the two colleges offering Russian and one offering Spanish are thought to remain.
> Over the three years 1974, 1975 and 1976 the *output* of trained teachers who had taken a foreign language as a main subject from the colleges for whom returns are available was remarkably stable. The mean output figures were as follows:

	French	*German*	*Spanish*	*Russian*
Teachers' certificate	632	48	–	1
BEd degree	168	15	–	1
PGCE	235	32	6	5
Total	1035	95	6	7

This compares with 1976 *admission* figures of:

	French	*German*	*Spanish*	*Russian*
Teachers' certificate	217(182)	4(3)	–	–
BEd degree	338(287)	28(24)	–	–
PGCE	273(232)	31(26)	8(7)	4(3)
Total	828(701)	63(53)	8(7)	4(3)

(The figures in brackets incorporate an estimated wastage of approximately 15 per cent to allow more realistic comparison with the mean output figures quoted above.)

Overall, by 1976, potential output had declined by some 30 per cent — a figure which mirrors the enforced national reduction in teacher training places although French especially was expected to be protected (College letter 1/76). Also few of the college closures had by then affected intakes.

However, within the sharp overall reduction, post-graduate entries had remained stable and BEd admissions increased significantly — by some 70 per cent.

In an additional paper in which the survey data is used as a basis for further projections, Palmer speculates that whereas it is likely that 1,035 specialist teachers of French are likely to emerge from all courses of training in the university and public sectors in 1979, this figure is likely to be reduced to 442 by 1981, a decrease which would be proportionately well in excess of the overall cutback in teacher training despite the request contained in College letter 1/76 to 'protect' French in order to offset the shortage of teachers of this subject. The survey is currently being repeated and more up-to-date information will become available in the summer of 1978. It is worthy of note now, however, that many institutions in the non-university sector are currently undertaking a fundamental review of their BEd and BEd Honours courses, and there are indications that reduced intake numbers, combined with an anticipation that most teaching posts in a declining secondary market in the 1980s will be taken by those entering through PGCE courses, are leading several institutions to view the BEd course as more suitable for training teachers of children up to the age of twelve or thirteen years. If this development became widespread, the ability of institutions to produce specialist modern language teachers through BEd courses would be reduced still further.

Priorities for the nature and content of the training of foreign language teachers are considered elsewhere in this paper. However, it is worthy of note here that not all undergraduate courses leading either to BA or BEd courses contain a mandatory requirement that intending teachers of foreign languages should spend an appropriate period of residence in the country of the language concerned. It is generally held that one year is an appropriate period of time for this, yet many candidates for entry to PGCE courses have spent far less than this, and while most BEd graduates will have been abroad for a minimum period of six months, by no means all will have had, or taken, the opportunity to be abroad for a full academic year.

In its first report (1977), the steering committee established by the London and Home Counties Regional Advisory Council to undertake the rationalisation of initial teacher training, contained a number of significant recommendations. The report urges that action should be taken to attract French and German graduates to postgraduate courses of training. It also pointed out that within the geographical area covered by the ILEA only one institution has a surviving BEd French course, and that as a result of closures the whole region will contain no BEd course training teachers of German.

In the light of this, it is surprising to note that DES Letter R8/116/27 dated 11.10.77 refers only to mathematics, handicraft and business studies as deserving of further 'shortage' treatment. At the same time, the letter states that 'further reorganisation may lead to further reductions in the range of subjects' available and recommends 'that scarce provisions in those subjects such as the more unusual

modern languages is retained wherever possible in order to preserve a national base.

To summarise, the present trends must give cause for alarm. The future supply of teachers of all the main foreign languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian) appears to be seriously at risk through a lack of suitably qualified candidates or declining numbers of training places or both. The imbalance between men and women is increasing rapidly and will not be easy to reverse. Candidates are still coming forward for training without having spent an adequate period of time in the country whose language they intend to teach.

The education of foreign language teachers

Undergraduate modern language studies

The introduction into *most* (but by no means all) undergraduate foreign language courses of the year abroad has greatly strengthened the spoken command of the foreign language of many recruits to teaching. The first priority must be to make such study abroad a *sine qua non* for all intending foreign language teachers. There are in addition a number of further changes needed in first degree courses before young graduates can be considered adequately prepared to train as language teachers. These are:

(i) serious study of the phonology and phonetics of the foreign language, at present entirely neglected by some degree courses;

(ii) acquaintance with recent descriptions of the grammar of the foreign language;

(iii) knowledge of recent changes in usage and regional varieties of the language supported by practice in well-stocked and catalogued tape-libraries;

(iv) some study in depth of aspects of the economy of the foreign community, its institutions, history, geography, communications etc.

Need to combine foreign language study with the study of English

The foreign language teacher ought to be equipped to teach younger secondary school pupils (years one to three) both their foreign language and their mother tongue for two reasons:

(i) The language teacher is at a disadvantage in establishing confident relationships with his pupils because he must so far as possible avoid using English in the foreign language classroom. Pupils' responses are inevitably stilted and this affects the kinds of teacher-pupil relationships that are possible and pupils' liking for and persistence with the subject. If the teacher also teaches the English lessons, closer and more lasting relationships can be established during the dialogue in the mother tongue, which positively enrich the dialogue in foreign language lessons.

(ii) The foreign language teacher who also teaches English to his pupils can help them in many ways to understand how the two languages interact. The teacher can also better appreciate the individual pupil's linguistic problems and see his

or her performance in the foreign language classroom in better perspective. He can ensure, too, that his pupils are not bewildered by being offered different names for parts of speech, tenses etc. The need, therefore, is for flexible English language options to be available to students following modern language degree courses. This need will not be met simply by offering courses in literary criticism. It is the language that is the central concern. Few departments of English literature will be equipped, unfortunately, to teach English language to modern language students.

Need for diversification in first degree courses

Apart from the need to combine English with foreign languages, it will become increasingly necessary in the 1980s for language teachers to be able to offer more than one foreign language. The effect of the expected sharp fall in school rolls will be that school staffs must contract. Many teachers who leave will not be replaced. Heads of schools will be bound to look for language teachers who can offer more than one language (and ideally three) if existing patterns of language choice in the curriculum are to be maintained.

Need for the study of 'education of the ear' for junior teachers

Undergraduate courses for teachers intending to work at junior or middle-school level must include experience in courses designed to teach pupils *how to learn* languages. The essential element is 'education of the ear', a necessary apprenticeship for many pupils who have been conditioned to 'switch off' their hearing, who do not know how to hear and who have not got the expectations regarding what to listen for, that later language learning via the ear will call for. Teachers of language must learn to cooperate with teachers of music, of English and of PE/movement/drama in the planning of progressive, integrated courses leading to discrimination and sophistication in hearing new rhythms, sounds and intonations and in matching new sounds to written notations of various kinds.

Long term need to prepare teachers of foreign languages in the foreign country

In the longer term it must be hoped that universities and polytechnics will find ways of working in partnership with institutions abroad so that increasingly foreign language teachers would spend not one year as at present but perhaps three years of their four year course in the foreign country. One year at least of this period would be spent working in some capacity outside the educational system. The present pattern by which most teachers proceed from sixth form to university and back to school is indefensible.

Need for the study of 'language'

The Bullock Report recommended that all teachers should study 'language' as an aspect of human behaviour in the course of their preparation. Foreign language teachers must have a special responsibility in the working out of school language learning policies 'across the curriculum' and their education should include the study of language acquisition, the relationship of language and thought and the role of language in education.

The training of foreign language teachers

Postgraduate training

Lack of link between initial training year and probation (induction) year
There is at present no link between the initial year spent studying for the Certificate in Education and the probationary year in the first post. There is no machinery for determining which parts of the young teacher's training would be better undertaken in the probationary year rather than in the initial training year. The James Report recommended that these two years should form part of the 'second cycle' of training and went on to describe the complementary and interrelated components of the two-year cycle envisaged. Even if this is too radical a conception to be accepted yet it should at least be possible to produce agreed guidelines for UDEs and colleges on the one hand and LEAs on the other hand indicating which aspects of initial training ought to be emphasised during the certificate year and the probationary year.

Provision for training in the 'minority' languages
There is no provision for initial training in the minority languages in many PGCE courses in UDEs and colleges. In consequence many graduates in these languages enter schools having been trained by tutors who do not adequately command a language other than French. At the same time there is a wasteful and haphazard use of specialist experience in the minority languages in the few centres which can offer it. Again the James proposals for the nomination of 'centres of excellence' seem to offer the way forward.

Acquiring new language skills during the initial training year
When undergraduate courses have not included the study of eg phonetics, or the teaching of English, or a third foreign language, it has been found possible in some initial training courses to put these studies into the course as optional units. For example, it has been found quite feasible, without reducing the usefulness of the PGCE course, to introduce all the foreign language students in a given year to Italian, taking them well beyond 'O' level in the year and equipping them, after a period of study in Italy in the summer following the PGCE course, to teach Italian to sixth form groups in the schools to which they go in September. Further in-service study and opportunities for teacher exchange could build on such beginnings and transform the position of the minority languages in schools.

Undergraduate courses of initial training
If the BEd courses, whose variety is considerable, are to continue to be used for the preparation of foreign language specialists for secondary schools, it follows that teachers qualifying through this route must be of a standard at least comparable to those obtaining a BA followed by a PGCE. It is extremely doubtful whether the standards and range of competence reached by the good BA (with year abroad), followed by PGCE year (a total of five years' study) could be achieved in three years. It seems clear therefore that BEd courses should be of four years' duration with a fifth (intercalated) year to be spent abroad for modern linguists.

The majority of BEd courses are designed to enable students with a variety of different subject interests to train as teachers of children of different ages. It may be as a consequence of this multiplicity of purpose that such courses fail to take full account of the specialist interests of those wishing to teach in secondary schools. For future modern language teachers this has severe drawbacks, given the demands made upon their personal linguistic competence and on their skill as teachers. It is worth considering whether a selected number of institutions should be designated (as the James Report proposed) to offer specialised BEd courses designed to meet these particular needs. For this development to be worthwhile it would be desirable to make provision in certain of the designated institutions for languages other than French, and to make arrangements for students to be able to take these languages either *ab initio*, or at least from a lower starting point than GCE 'A' level. If the BEd course is considered inappropriate for this purpose, the possibility must be considered of offering alternative degree courses incorporating a teaching qualification.

In-service training

Need to define the respective roles of initial training, the induction year(s) and mid-career education and training

While much has been written recently in support of the need for in-service education and, despite financial stringency, substantial resources earmarked for this work, there appear to have been few attempts, either for teachers in general or, more specifically, for teachers of foreign languages, to devise a programme of development in which the roles of initial training, induction and mid-career education are clearly differentiated. In *Modern languages in comprehensive schools*, HMI highlight a number of areas in which in-service education clearly has an important role, eg the definition of objectives specific to the school, the role of the head of department. At present, however, the teacher of a foreign language is trained in one of a wide variety of institutions, obtains a first teaching post in an authority which may or may not have a clear policy for giving active support to its probationer teachers and is subsequently likely to meet during his career an uncoordinated, haphazard provision of opportunities for further education or training. It is essential that consideration should be given to the identification of (i) the fundamental requirements which should be a part of initial training, (ii) the specific needs of the foreign language teacher in the first two years of his career, (iii) areas of professional and academic need which should more properly be considered the role of mid-career education.

Special need of in-service training for language teachers

The subject matter of all the disciplines in the curriculum changes constantly but for the foreign language teacher, trying to interpret the way of life and the language of the foreign speech community to his pupils the problems are immense. Not only is the language in a constant state of evolution, not only are the foreign presses pouring out cataracts of books and articles each week but the institutions and attitudes studied during the young teacher's year abroad become dated almost before he has unpacked his bags. The language teacher needs to be especially vigilant not to

present to his pupils a view of the foreign language and of those who speak it which is untrue and out of date.

Unlike any other subject in the curriculum the language teacher's mastery of his language is subtly eroded by the English speaking environment and by the fact that the teacher has to survive in English outside the walls of his language classroom. The curriculum 'jungle' is neutral towards maths or science or geography but as soon as the language teacher or his pupils venture outside the language classroom English is waiting to interfere with the speech patterns and the vocabulary so painstakingly mastered in the brief language lessons. In no subject area is the need for regular sabbatical terms for in-service re-charging of batteries more essential.

Priorities for in-service training

There seem to be five areas on which in-service training should concentrate:

(i) maintenance of the teacher's high standards of accuracy in the use of spoken and written language which he teaches;

(ii) updating of the teacher's understanding of the life and culture of the foreign community, including (but not necessarily centring on) its literature;

(iii) reappraisal of classroom methods and constant search for new and interesting materials and texts;

(iv) re-examination of teaching objectives to meet changes in school populations and organisation;

(v) search for new solutions ('classroom-based research') such as parental lack of encouragement, difficulties of planning school journeys for all pupils regardless of home background, the problem of reading in the foreign language for pupils of average ability, the controversy regarding the usefulness of translation as a teaching technique etc.

Need to avoid present wasteful misuse of resources

At present there is a wasteful overlap of provision of in-service training and no coordination of the provision across the different levels at which it is provided. There seem to be broadly four levels of in-service provision:

(i) Nationally recruited courses organised by HMI and other nationally recruited conferences or symposia.

(ii) Courses and workshops organised by LEAs and capable of meeting local problems or of interpreting in local terms the lessons discussed at nationally recruited courses.

(iii) Courses organised by universities, colleges, polytechnics or other centres, recruiting sometimes nationally and sometimes locally, and drawing on the special expertise of the staff or resources of the institution or the particular research with which it is concerned. (Many of these carry further degree or diploma qualifications.)

(iv) In-service training based on the school department with or without help from local resource centres or LEA advisers.

There exists no machinery for coordinating work at these different levels. It would seem logical that themes selected as important enough to be worked at in nationally recruited in-service courses supported by the full weight and resources of the Inspectorate should be followed up at LEA level by courses and workshops organised by local advisers and teacher/tutors. This would require, however, some machinery for the identification of the topics and problems to be given priority, the acceptance of a common policy at national and local level, forward planning to permit the gathering of suitable materials and tutors and agreement on a time-scale to which course organisers at national and local level would work.

A first step towards a less wasteful use of in-service effort in foreign language teaching would be to hold a planning conference every two years at which those responsible for policy at national and at LEA level might agree on:

(i) priorities for the next two-year period and broadly agreed approaches to the objectives selected;

(ii) identification of aspects of the work best treated at nationally recruited courses and those appropriate to local follow up study groups or workshops which both interpret general themes in local terms and, of course, reach many more teachers.

In a similar way the in-service, or college, provision offered by institutions such as university or polytechnic language centres, needs to be integrated more closely both with what teachers in schools are asking for and with what happens after teachers return to schools from such courses.

Need for preparation for in-service work and for supervised follow-up

An important difference between in-service training and initial training concerns the *expectations* brought to the experience by the learner. Students in initial training come to the PGCE course from closely similar degree courses, with expectations that are broadly similar and predicatable. Teachers in mid-career, however, arrive at in-service courses from a wide variety of school experience and with varying expectations. The common pattern of national courses lasting perhaps a week takes no account of differing expectations. Little, or nothing, is done by way of preparation before teachers arrive at DES courses. No reading is prescribed, no prior definition of expectation asked for. The same is true of most courses offered by universities and polytechnics. Even more wasteful, however, is the almost total lack of follow-up especially after nationally recruited courses. The excitement and fresh thinking which are generated at the first-rate DES courses are not followed up at LEA and school department level.

The value of the 'reciprocal course' for foreign language teachers

A form of in-service training of proven value for the foreign language teacher which cries out for further development is the 'reciprocal course'. The essence of this form of in-service training is to bring together two groups of teachers, one from the UK and the other from France (or another country whose language is taught in our schools). Each group is interested in perfecting its control of the other's native language. Each group consists of experienced teachers with considerable reserves of teaching skill. These groups are subdivided into small tutorial groups containing

equal numbers from each language. Within these, under the supervision of tutors who provide suitable materials and propose activities and themes to guide the work, the teachers work in pairs alternating as learner and teacher on alternate days.

Not only does the reciprocal technique prove to be a most effective way of improving mastery of the foreign language but the daily, structured dialogue within a group of well-informed teachers from the other speech community proves to be a most effective way of bringing up to date conceptions about its way of life, institutions, culture etc.

Although so far the reciprocal technique has only been tried with teachers and with sixth formers, it appears to have great potential in the area of acquisition of languages for special purposes. The 'generalist' language teacher is unlikely to be able to offer much help to advanced learners who have spent much of their professional life learning the concepts of their profession, whether they be accountants scrutinising the books of a factory, or heart specialists discussing with colleagues from another language community the latest pace-maker. Both concepts and language are needed and those who possess both are the specialists who speak the other language. This suggests that reciprocal courses of a new kind may in future be developed, which would bring together matched groups of specialists (lawyers, accountants, doctors, engineers, sales managers etc.) from two languages. The first days of the course would be spent in bringing all the participants up to an agreed 'threshold level' in their target language. At the same time they would learn how, in their native language, to give appropriate help to their colleagues from the other country. After the first week of the course these two components would give way to intensive work in pairs and small bilingual groups in simulated work tasks (ie discussion of a balance sheet, a blueprint, a judicial summing-up, or an account of a new surgical technique).

5. Foreign languages in industry and commerce

A.C.W. Crane

There is a widespread view among teachers of modern languages that industry and commerce should make more use of linguists. There is an even more widespread view held outside educational circles that foreign languages are a nuisance against which possession of English as mother tongue provides protection.

At graduate level there is no greater discrimination against those who have read languages than there is or may appear to be against other arts graduates. The graduate has her (or his) foot on a ladder leading to the post of Prime Minister, chairman of a mighty corporation, ambassador or permanent head of a government department or wherever her or his ambitions lie, to the same extent as but no more than someone coming from another discipline. How far she or he will go will depend in all cases on personal qualities and to a lesser extent on opportunity. For such jobs the ambitious graduate will be competing with the best from other disciplines.

The professional avenues open to the graduate will depend as in say, medicine, law, architecture or engineering on the path taken after the first degree. It can lead as we all know to the chair, the headship, or other levels consonant with the aspirations, inclinations and talents of the individual concerned. Apart from teaching, two other professional opportunities lie in translating and interpreting. In order to practise these skills, further post-graduate training is required. This used to be provided mainly through apprenticeship or on-the-job training, or even by a system amounting to little more than a process of trial and error. Nowadays these methods are increasingly supplemented and to a significant extent superseded by vocational courses at universities and polytechnics usually leading to a diploma.

Up to this point we have seen the graduate using her or his first degree in a conventional and tidy way as in many other disciplines putting it to professional use via post graduate work, and thus obtaining career opportunities which although satisfactory are, apart from teaching, available only in very limited numbers — especially for interpreters. We begin to tread more dangerous ground when we turn to the graduate entering employment outside teaching immediately after taking his first degree.

This is the area in which full information is lacking, in which strong feelings are aroused by comparing what appears to be happening with what various people are convinced ought to be happening now or what may even be presented as essential for national survival in the future. If one is tempted to make comparisons between the modern language graduate and the chemist or engineer, one finds, and this must be stated categorically, the modern language degree is not a vocational qualification.

It is possible to take a graduate chemist straight from university, put him in charge of a production shift in a chemical plant after a comparatively short introduction to the process. There is, generally speaking, no comparable position for a modern language graduate.

The careers advisers of the universities and polytechnics (AGCAS) annually collect information on the first destination of graduates. The situation in 1976 for modern language students was that 25 per cent went into teacher training and 20 per cent did further training or study (excluding teacher training). The remaining 55 per cent was made up of 21 per cent going into permanent home employment, 5 per cent going into temporary home employment, 9 per cent going into overseas employment (permanent and temporary). Within these going into permanent home employment 15 per cent went into civil/diplomatic service and 19 per cent into industry. These figures represent 3.1 per cent and 4 per cent respectively of the total graduate output in modern languages in 1976. We also know that in *GO 78* — the *Annual Guide to Graduate Opportunities* (New Opportunity Press) 700 of the 2000 employers listed will seek or accept arts graduates among others, but less than twenty express specific interest in a modern language degree.

Of greater national interest because of its much more considerable dimensions is the almost limitless range of occupations in which a knowledge of a foreign language is to a greater or lesser extent important as an accomplishment supportive to other qualifications or experiences. The *Financial Times* (29.1.77) referring to an investigation of 50 Queen's Award exporters by a school of languages stated 'some 60 per cent of the companies questioned now asked for a second language at least as part of the qualifications for export work, but less than a quarter said they were willing to pay a premium in order to get people with such a qualification'. It is rare for industry to pay people for language degrees even when they have equipped them to use a foreign language rather than talk about it and what has been written in it.

Some of our largest and most successful companies, including international corporations of giant stature, subscribe to the view that they have no posts, other than as translators, for which a foreign language is an essential qualification.

We may ask them how does industry manage and does it manage well enough?

The linguistic needs of industry are, broadly and very briefly, covered by the following means:

(i) the use of professional and business services (ranging from typists through translators, interpreters, advertising and sales agents to foreign lawyers representing the company abroad).
(ii) the direct employment of native speakers of foreign languages.
(iii) exploitation of existing or acquired ancillary language knowledge possessed by staff selected primarily on the basis of other qualifications and experience.
(iv) the specific training in a foreign language of someone selected for a particular post abroad.
(v) 'mono-dialogue', a common practice in negotiation is to write in English but to be ready to receive replies in the other language. The same principle may be applied to the spoken word.

There are of course many exceptions large and small to these generalisations ranging from the managing director who does his own selling in Arabic to the

graduates of international marketing courses. We may conclude that it would be well for this country if the flexibility of our foreign language education system provided a background giving greater opportunities for these exceptions to occur.

By whatever standard efficiency in the production of materials or manufactures or the provision of services and the sale of these is measured, the constituent parts of these operations must be aggregated and compared in accountancy terms as *costs*. Any cost saving may be interpreted as an increase in potential productivity or profitability, hence any natural advantages of the producer must be exploited.

Location is one of the most significant factors in the cost of production, distribution and sales. Examples are provided by favourable climate, easy access to raw materials, to cheap power sources, to suitable labour and markets. In the UK our location may be seen not only physically as an off-shore island of the continent (and Community) of Europe, but culturally, communicatively and commercially as the founder member and still significant minority shareholder in the technological company of the English-speaking world.

One of our biggest advantages is being understood in our native language by so many people and having access through it to so large a share of technical innovation. Considered in economic terms — the matching of needs to scarce resources — we may be asked how much time we are prepared, nationally, to devote to foreign language learning when no foreign language is of the same importance to us as English is to others.

There is a compelling requirement for anyone with aspirations to a significant job in any nation dependent on international trade to learn English really well. He needs English not only to communicate with North Americans and other native speakers of English but also with other second language users, as well as to obtain access to much information.

In considering global curricula the time spent by a German or a Frenchman in learning English might be regarded as time we could save *vis-à-vis* our competitors or EEC partners. A considerable body of academic opinion holds that there is no time for a foreign language — desirable as it might be — in a business studies degree if the essential syllabus is to be covered.

There is no suggestion here that there should be any skimping of the time devoted to learning the use of English as mother tongue — quite the reverse. It is rather that full advantage should be taken of the freedom of choice offered by having English — as opposed to, say, Dutch — as native language. This cost effective view of the time element might at least prompt a hard look at the total value of the French in most people's schooling.

Acceptance of this fact does not mean that we should abandon interest in foreign languages. What it does mean is that our strategy for foreign language acquisition, and exploitation after appropriate skills have been acquired should be based on a practical appraisal of our needs, as much so, but with inevitably different conclusions, as is the policy of countries such as Holland and Denmark, or indeed Germany, France and Italy. It may be noted in passing that 84 per cent of pupils in secondary schools in France study English and in West Germany the figure is nearer 100 per cent.

We have displayed a lower general competence in the use of foreign languages than any European country with the possible (though now certainly rapidly diminishing) exception of France. Those of us who hold the study and practice of foreign languages to be an important and rewarding activity have tended to allow the feelings of shame and guilt engendered by our comparatively poor performance to lead us into false analogies and conclusions. The English teacher of German will correctly compare and perhaps equate the relative difficulty that the learning of English presents to a native German speaker with that of the native English speaker studying German. He will correctly compare and equate the educative and cultural value of these activities. From this position he may extrapolate the wholly incorrect assumption that German for English speakers has the same practical value in quantative terms as English has for German speakers. Fortunately or unfortunately this is demonstrably not the case. The same considerations apply to French, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, Russian, Arabic etc.

For the purposes of global communication, mutual comprehension, trading, and cultural and scientific interchange and development, English speakers in appropriate numbers (but here we are concerned only with the inhabitants of the UK) need to study and practise foreign languages. We cannot, however, accord to any single foreign language the priority nor derive from its study the rewards that attach to English in other countries.

The possession of English as a mother tongue of course constitutes and should be recognised as a considerable advantage. If this country is to maintain and improve its position in the world it is not, however, sufficient to accept in a negative or complacent way that we can save the time that non-English speaking countries have to devote to acquiring English, we must consider the most profitable use of the time we save. It need not necessarily be spent on languages. If, for example, the hours at present wasted in not acquiring French were devoted to the improvement of numeracy, it might be plausibly argued that a significant increase in our national competitiveness might be obtained. This would be a too simplistic and radical solution. It would be preferable if the educators could find means of providing better service to employers by adopting a policy which would enable the use of language to be pursued as a core study in the school curriculum.

Possibly too much time has been spent in presenting or appearing to argue what are indeed facts not susceptible to dispute. The necessity or justification arises from the reluctance of those committed to and caring for the continued study and teaching of modern languages to accept a situation which might appear to endanger their vocation. Modern language teachers bring themselves into contempt when they allow circumstances to force them into the position of claiming that British industry is unable to operate unless modern language graduates are put in charge, as of right, of export sales and international marketing.

Infuriatingly (to the modern linguist) it can be conclusively shown that this is not so. It is tempting then to move on to the position (or claim) that 'OK, British industry survives but *how much better* would it survive if it behaved linguistically as other European countries behave'. — What does this mean? What is it intended to mean? Clearly that because native French or German speakers *must* learn English then

equally clearly English speakers must learn — what? French? German? Or both, plus Spanish, Italian, Russian, Chinese, Arabic, Japanese, Portuguese and Dutch?

From a practical and materialistic point of view it is difficult for someone exempt by the accident of birth from the necessity of learning English to know in what direction he should turn to improve his ability to communicate internationally. As things stand this choice is largely made for him; statistically speaking the schoolchild will learn French. If he finds the subject as taught irrelevant to his interests and needs he has little alternative. His teachers cannot convincingly argue that French is indispensable or even overridingly important as a second language; the subject then tends to become sterile and something of a formal exercise to all students who do not intend to take French to or beyond 'A' level.

It would be wrong and unwise for English speakers *en masse* to feel they can contract out of foreign language learning because of the special position of their native language. Such a feeling is less widespread in Britain than it is in the United States not least, one hopes, because of an appreciation that English in a putative United States of Europe would not be preponderant as a first language. Of the political and international groupings to which we belong it is in the EEC only that the pre-eminence of English is challenged and where political considerations seriously affect our linguistic requirements.

If pressure is to be brought to bear on industry and commerce and, indeed, government, a considerable change in direction and emphasis is necessary. There is no reason to suppose that employers in the future will be any more susceptible to persuasion to employ modern language graduates without other training in posts for which they are not suited than they have been in the past. The only people likely to be influenced — and to their detriment — are the graduates themselves who may be led to believe that many more opportunities exist in export sales, marketing and market research than actually do. Employers would welcome the availability of much greater numbers of entrants from a wide range of disciplines and training area not only at graduate level but below with an effective knowledge of a needed foreign language or an orientation towards its rapid acquisition, added to the primary qualification for which they will be hired.

In order to bring this about we should encourage as much diversity as possible in the choice of a first or only foreign language by making the maximum use of actual and potential resources for the teaching of languages other than French.

We cannot however expect by this means to provide a sufficient spread of reserve subsidiary language knowledge to put even a large company in the position of being able to select, for example for an assignment in São Paulo, from among its Portuguese-speaking engineers.

Specific language requirements in industry and commerce are likely to emerge in many — even perhaps the majority of — cases after staff have been recruited for other reasons rather than before. Hence the present provision of adult courses to meet these needs should be extended locally in consultation with employers. Such courses should be recognised as a continuing and desirable resource and not treated as an emergency substitute for some other kind of provision.

The foundation for the success of this approach on a national scale would lie in

the schools where we might hope that gradually but to a considerable degree the learning of French by other than modern language specialists, to an unsatisfactory, unmaintainable and unrewarding standard of achievement would be replaced by a constructive study of the practice and acquisition of language, and the extension and development of facility in its use for various purposes. This preparatory study would for obvious reasons be largely based on the learning of French but, in appropriate circumstances, German, Spanish, Italian or other languages would be used. The approach would always be closely co-ordinated with the effective use of English for practical purposes and in some cases might be developed or led by teachers of English.

Nothing in these proposals is intended to displace the study of two foreign languages to 'A' level by those making modern languages their main field, nor to discourage the taking of one foreign language at 'A' level in combination with other subjects. As far as the latter opinion is concerned it appears to be becoming increasingly difficult to find a pattern of only three subjects including a language which has reasonable vocational relevance, a situation which may be ameliorated by the 'N' and 'F' scheme.

The suggestions outlined above are offered for discussion. They represent an attempt to substitute a positive policy towards the teaching, learning and use of languages to the benefit of the national economy for something closely resembling no policy at all. The key to the success of any such policy lies in the appreciation of our unique position as a European country which does not have to spend time and money on learning English.

Appendix: The views of school Heads: a survey

G.M. Matthews

Aims and methods of the survey

1 This survey was conducted in April/May 1978.

2 The principal aim of the survey was to examine the views of Head teachers on the curricular role of modern languages and the problems of organising language courses in maintained post-primary schools.

3 The questionnaire was sent to 7 heads of schools who had published statements or taken part in discussions on foreign language teaching. Copies were also sent to 11 LEA Advisers or Inspectors with responsibility for foreign languages, who were asked to approach Head teachers in their authorities whose views they considered valuable. We gratefully acknowledge the help given by Mr M.R. Wigram HMI, Staff Inspector for Modern Languages, by members of the Executive Committee of NALA, by the LEA Advisers who kindly agreed to distribute the questionnaire, and by the Head teachers who submitted informative and in many cases very detailed replies.

4 This report is based on an analysis of 53 replies received by 23 May 1978.

Distribution of replies

1 Replies to the questionnaire were received from the following LEAs:

Inner London	3
London Borough of Barking	3
London Borough of Merton	7
London Borough of Waltham Forest	5
Dorset	5
Hampshire	9
Leicestershire	7
Nottinghamshire	3
Oxfordshire	1
Somerset	4
West Glamorgan	4
unidentified	2

2 Types of school were represented as follows:

11-16 secondary modern	1
11-16 comprehensive	10

11-13/14 junior comprehensive	9
13/14-18 senior comprehensive	16
11-18 comprehensive	15
11-18 grammar	1
unidentified	1

All but four schools (two boys', two girls') were mixed.

3. The size of schools varied from 500 to 2,150. 29 schools had under 1,000 pupils each, 17 between 1,000 and 1,500.

4. The subject specialisms of the Head teacher correspondents were as follows:

English	13
Sciences	10
Modern languages	7
Geography	6
History	5
Mathematics	2
Economics	2
Classics	1
Religious Education	1
Physical Education	1
Other or unspecified subjects	5

Findings

1. (a) **What do you consider to be the principal purpose of teaching a foreign language to children at school?**

Several correspondents answered this question by listing 2 or more main purposes viewed as of equal importance or in order of priority.

28 of the 53 correspondents felt that languages should be taught *to foster awareness of other cultures and understanding of other ways of life*, while 12 Heads felt that a main purpose of language teaching was *to broaden the mind and complete the student's education*. 24 correspondents saw the chief value of FL teaching in helping to *promote general communication skills and general linguistic awareness*; several referred to the additional insights this might give into the study and use of the mother tongue. *Understanding and communicating with speakers of other languages* was mentioned by 21 correspondents. Other main purposes quoted were *To provide a useful professional or ancillary skill* (4), *to provide an enjoyable, educational experience* (2), and *to prepare for future examination courses* (1). 1 Head felt that there was no point in answering the question as the reasons for teaching foreign languages were all sufficiently well known.

(b) What do you see as the chief reasons for encouraging certain pupils to study a second language?

The majority of correspondents (36) felt that it should serve to extend the skills and maximise the potential of able linguists. Other major reasons included: to provide a basis for career interests and specialism in higher/further education (19); to widen further the pupil's cultural outlook (12); and to train able linguists to serve national needs (5). 3 Heads thought the comparative study of 2 foreign languages (perhaps 1 Germanic, 1 Romance) particularly valuable for able linguists, while several others pointed to the importance of German and Spanish as disciplines ancillary to other specialisms. 2 correspondents felt that a second fore ign language could usefully be provided as an alternative target for those who, owing to lack of ability or motivation, had already reached their maximum potential in a FL.

2. Do you think the study of a foreign language should form part of a common core curriculum

(a) from age 11-14?

(b) from age 11-16?

46 thought that a foreign language should be included in the core curriculum from 11-14; only 5 opposed this view. Opinion on whether a foreign language should form part of the core from 11-16 was more evenly divided (26 for, 25 against). Several Heads differentiated between ideals and practical possibilities, suggesting that problems of staffing, course design and pupil motivation severely restricted opportunities for teaching a foreign language as a core subject up to age 16, however desirable this might be. A number of correspondents wished to encourage as many pupils as possible to continue foreign language study after age 14 without formally including it in a prescribed core.

If so, should this common core be offered to *all* pupils?

15 Heads felt that foreign language courses should be taught to all pupils from 11-14, with variations in course design to provide for differing levels of ability. 22 wished to exclude from this core element pupils needing remedial work in basic literacy or numeracy skills. 10 were in favour of teaching a foreign language to all pupils from 11-16; however, several others felt that a compulsory common core foreign language course for all pupils should be limited to 1 or 2 years' duration.

How might language study within such a core be related to the study of mother-tongue?

11 Heads stated that there was a need to encourage awareness of the *structure* of language and that teachers of foreign languages and the mother tongue should agree on appropriate common objectives which might include comparative and contrastive approaches to points of grammar. 2 others believed that linguistic structure should be treated in the curriculum of the upper secondary school (eg 14-18) and that such courses might be particularly appropriate for the sixth form. 6 favoured close and regular liaison between foreign language and mother-tongue departments. 6 others thought that foreign language study could be most effectively related to the mother

tongue within a general Language or Humanities department, it was suggested that such a form of organisation could, for example, provide classes with courses in the mother tongue and in a foreign language taught by the same teacher. Others preferred a less formal association of the language disciplines: an unstructured comparative/contrastive approach giving attention eg to cognates and loan words, suggested by 8 Heads, or the encouragement of comparative literary study in the sixth form. One correspondent saw the organisational and methodological problems of relating foreign languages to mother-tongue learning as virtually insuperable, while 2 others felt that related language courses would benefit only a small minority of pupils possessing appropriate sensitivity and powers of abstraction.

3. **In your view, what major constraints affect the provision of school foreign language courses**
   (a) from age 11-16?
   (b) from age 16-18?

(a) 33 Heads considered the difficulty of recruiting skilled language teachers to be a major constraint (in some cases, the chief constraint) in the 11-16 sector. Some correspondents referred to particular deficiencies in foreign language staff: lack of knowledge of methods and materials, unwillingness to teach foreign language courses leading to a variety of objectives, or lack of enthusiasm for teaching their subject in a comprehensive school. Other constraints most frequently mentioned by correspondents were: problems of timetabling and arranging classroom space, particularly for "uneconomic" language classes (21 Heads; this problem appeared to affect in particular parallel 'O' level/'CSE' classes and FL2 options); pupils' lack of motivation for foreign language learning (13); and the conflict between comprehensive school principles (especially with regard to mixed-ability grouping) and the need for setting in many foreign language courses. Some Heads felt that there was a danger of the further decline of FL2 study as it tended in many schools to be regarded as an elitist subject incompatible with some interpretations of the comprehensive ethos.

Correspondents also instanced problems of transfer from lower to upper schools, especially in respect of methodology and grammar coverage (4); lack of suitable teaching materials for the extremes of the ability range (4); the problem of ensuring stability of staffing where no sixth-form work was available (2); and difficulties in arranging maintenance of audio and visual equipment (2). The cost of foreign travel and the lack of home encouragement were also mentioned as factors making for lack of success in foreign language learning.

(b) With regard to the sixth form sector, 11 correspondents referred to problems of staffing and timetabling, which particularly affected smaller language groups, and 15 to the lack of student demand for 'A' level literary courses (several Heads expressed confidence that a two-tier foreign language course structure would interest able linguists wishing to specialise in non-literary studies). Other problems mentioned were: providing satisfactory course continuity for students joining the sixth form from other schools (4); recruitment of skilled teaching staff (4);

demonstrating the career utility of sixth-form language/literature courses (2); and arranging foreign residence(1).

4. **If your school forms part of a 2-tier system (eg middle/upper schools): What do you see as the chief problems in achieving continuity in language teaching? Would you consider it feasible for a common scheme of work to be formulated for language courses from age 11-16 which could be implemented by lower and upper schools working in collaboration?**

The majority of Heads (17) who replied to this question felt that the task of ensuring close and permanent liaison between contributory and receiving schools presented the most serious problem. One Head commented: 'The major problem in achieving continuity is *communication*. The physical gap between schools, the different teachers involved, the differing environment providing different pressures all militate against successful communication and hence continuity.' Other problems in achieving course continuity were identified by Heads of upper schools as the disparity of foreign language provision in feeder schools and the variety of course content, objectives and methods in the middle school sector. 5 Heads pointed to the need for shared appointments of foreign language staff in 2-tier systems, commenting that different attitudes to method and organisation and, occasionally, personal differences sometimes made real liaison impossible. 4 Heads referred to the problem of staff turnover and the shortage of specialist linguists in middle schools, while three mentioned the traditional autonomy of the Head teacher and the fear of dictation by other schools as an obstacle to effective continuity. 1 Head felt that in 2-tier systems many pupils lost interest in foreign language study before transfer to the upper school; this made the task of foreign language teachers in the receiving school doubly difficult.

18 Heads believed that a common scheme of work from age 11-16 could be implemented by lower and upper schools, but stressed important preconditions: there should be adequate staffing; careful and continuous liaison should be practised to formulate agreed objectives; the scheme would require strong and preferably independent direction.

5. **How would you ensure that schools within a given area were able to offer a suitable range of first and second foreign languages? What problems do you foresee in implementing such a plan?**

29 Heads were in favour of a consortium approach to foreign language provision in local areas. 18 of these felt that a generous staffing ratio and facilities for pooling staff and resources were essential. The employment of peripatetic teachers was regarded by some as a valuable organisational aid, although others felt that such staff could not successfully motivate the children to learn languages as they were often not wholly accepted by younger pupils. Examples of locally shared resources in other subject areas were given by several correspondents, in particular the provision of 'outdoor pursuits afternoons' appeared to offer a useful model. 1 Head hoped that, where staffing presented a problem in resource planning, help might be provided from the further education sector. However, the Head of a senior comprehensive school pointed to the difficulties of distributing resources.

> Only the CEO and his advisory staff can ensure this. Although at times we have been able to send our teachers to help, we cannot guarantee to do so; we have staffing problems too and certainly no surplus teachers when one consaders the demands on staff for Careers and pastoral work.

Other proposed means of achieving zoning of foreign languages included: organising foreign language courses on a more intensive basis; and providing opportunities in the field of social studies for the creation of *sections bilingues* (3); creating sufficiently large individual schools to offer a range of foreign language courses (2); establishing an effective central organisation for each zone, with directives issued by foreign language advisers; providing 'twilight' foreign language groups and Saturday morning voluntary classes for FL2s (2); and offering alternative FL1s (2). Practical problems of school size were pointed out by several Heads:

> The LEA would have to insist that schools offered certain languages. But if a school is 6 form entry or below, it can only offer 1 in the first year, if viable groups are to continue in the year when options start; a 5-6 form base is essential if two classes are to continue, one class can continue into option year on a base of 3-4 forms, but then it has to continue as a mixed ability group and is usually small.

Other observed or anticipated problems included: ensuring that staff were appropriately qualified (in, say, 2 foreign languages to equal level, or 1 main and 1 subsidiary foreign language); ensuring agreement on course provision among local head teachers; overcoming parental opposition to eg German or Spanish as FL1; persuading Heads and other teachers that foreign language courses should receive a sufficiently high priority; arranging transport between schools, especially for FL2 groups; and catering for pupils moving into the area. Some Heads foresaw disagreement among teachers on teaching objectives and syllabi; some felt that individual schools ought to be able to meet course needs from their own resources. The Head of the one grammar school participating in the survey noted that providing a range of foreign languages presented no major problems within a selective system.

6. What do you see as the principal role of LEA specialist advisory staff?

The most important functions of advisory staff were seen as giving help and advice to teachers in schools and providing examples or recommendations for good practice; arranging in-service courses for language staff; and giving information and advice to Heads and specialist staff on materials, methods, standards and equipment. Other roles were identified as: assisting Heads with the selection of staff; encouraging contacts and cooperation between school foreign language departments, especially with regard to FL2 courses; organising foreign links; providing information on relevant national or regional research and development projects; and representing the problems experienced by schools to the LEA. A Midland Head drew attention to certain constraints affecting the adviser's scope of activity:

> Until advisory staff are in a position to require both collaboration between schools in producing a continuity of course, and language being included in a common core, their role regrettably must be one of facilitating, as far as they are able, and persuasion based on advice backed with example.

The value of the help given to Heads by advisory staff was stressed by several correspondents. 'The Head wants to be sure of his ground ... the specialist adviser is his confessor and guide'.

7. What opportunities would you like to offer to your pupils for links, visits and exchanges with the countries whose languages they are studying?

Most Heads were in favour of school exchanges arranged eg on an annual twinning basis. The informal family to family exchange was generally preferred, but the foreign study visit with formal tuition in a residential centre was favoured by 12 heads. 9 Heads considered that opportunities for visits abroad should be more widely available and that increased LEA funding for less affluent families was necessary to ensure this. Other points made by correspondents were: frequent day or weekend 'taster' trips should be provided for younger or linguistically less able pupils; regular correspondence between individual pupils and classes should precede and follow exchange visits; exchanges should involve pupils and teachers outside foreign language departments (examples were given of foreign tours by a school band and a drama group); a pool of supply teachers should be made available by the LEA to cover staff taking part in foreign visits. Replies drew attention to the valuable role of foreign language assistants as a link with the foreign country and deplored recent cutbacks in the numbers of foreign assistants employed in maintained schools. Several Heads whose pupils had made a number of exchange visits to France were keen to establish equally strong links with Germany.

8. Are you provided with sufficient information on languages in the fields of (a) higher and further education, (b) careers? If not, what additional information would you welcome?

(a) 34 Heads stated that their school received sufficient information on foreign language courses in higher and further education. Of the 5 who replied that more information on this subject would be welcome, 2 indicated that they wished to be better informed on the range and content of applied foreign language courses and on foreign languages as an ancillary study to other specialisms.

(b) 22 Heads stated that they had sufficient information on careers for modern linguists; 15 felt they needed more. 1 Head replied: 'What you've never had you don't miss'. 13 correspondents expressed a need for information to allow them to give comprehensive and authoritative answers to questions raised by parents and pupils on the vocational relevance of foreign language courses and appropriate target levels of foreign language study. 3 Heads felt that new surveys of the use of languages in commerce and industry on a local or regional basis would provide more help for 16+ and 18+ leavers who were interested in working with languages but did not want to follow FL courses at university or in further education.